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**RHETORIC FOR BECOMING OTHERWISE:  
LIFE, LITERATURE, GENEALOGY, FLIGHT**

A Dissertation in

English

by

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## ABSTRACT

*Rhetoric for Becoming Otherwise* begins with the Isocratean premise that thought, speech, writing are best understood as bridges between the already said of language and the emerging circumstances that are the occasions for their production. This argument is rehearsed across a variety of domains and instances following Isocrates exhortation that the rhetorician or practitioner of *philosophia* can only model the movement of discourse without expecting to provide any “true knowledge” or “absolute theory” for how to encounter the problematics of an endlessly deferred present.

As a matter of rhetoric, becoming otherwise is the continually renewed task of creating something new from the resources of language and for the demands of an ever deferred present—*Presocratics versus Classicists* (Chapter 1). As a matter of health, becoming otherwise is the necessity of overcoming limitation and suffering in order to achieve new norms of health and pursue the ever changing opportunities of a self-developing capacity for producing new capacities—*Normativity versus Normalization* (Chapter 2). In terms of literature, becoming otherwise is the diagnosis of constraint in the form of the orientations of habit and the contestation of the socializing force of all interpretive schemes as the means of multiplying possibilities for action—*Countergridlock versus Gridlock* (Chapter 3). As genealogy, becoming otherwise requires the patient examination of the forces of the past that seek to colonize the future in order to discover new modes of ethical subjectivity for the present—the *reoccurrence of the body and the repetition of its difference versus the rule of law and the right to desire* (Chapter 4). As an ecstatic practice, becoming otherwise is the affirmation of the impossible task of discovering a way through fields of force and lines of flight that offer no intelligibility outside of their unfolding paths of discovery and experimentation—*sorcerers versus priests* (Chapter 5). Ultimately, my dissertation seeks to multiply and intensify available tools for navigating imbrications of power/knowledge, to map a series of ways through reactive formations of thought, to affirm the impossible task of becoming otherwise.

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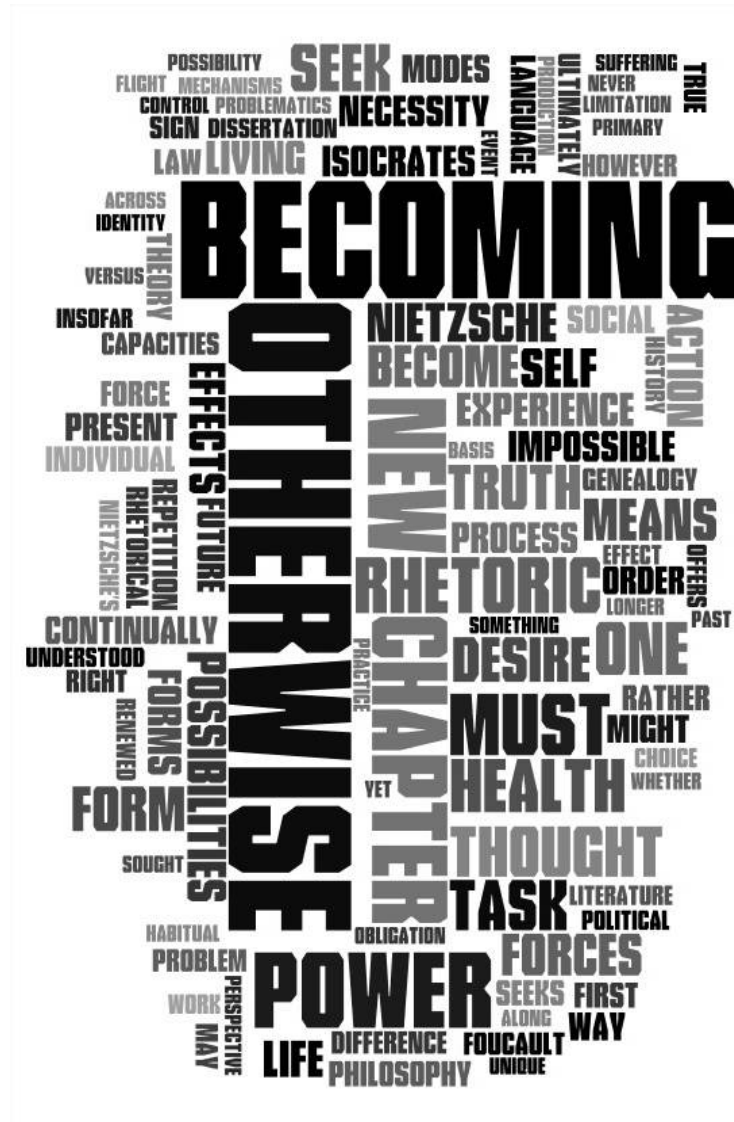
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# INTRODUCTION

Figure 1: *INTRODUCTION*<sup>\*</sup>

\* Each major section of this dissertation begins with a figure portraying the differential forces of individual word incidences in that section. All figures have been produced using the web service, <http://www.wordle.net>: “Wordle is a toy for generating ‘word clouds’ from text that you provide. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text” (Feinberg).

Though the present study deals with a set of topics common across recorded human history (rhetoric, health, ethics, thought), the historically unique contexts and materials by which they are explored lead into and out of the 1960s. Writing in the midst of the social and political upheavals of their day, the primary conceptual personae of each chapter (Michel Foucault, Kenneth Burke, Gilles Deleuze, and Carlos Castaneda) sought to construct a means of becoming otherwise as the solution to an impossible task: to overcome the recursive, self-reinforcing imbrications of Western regimes of power and knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

The most obvious version of the primary problematics of this period might be schematized as follows: the need to become otherwise arose out of both collective and individual rejections of the paternalist interventions of a state form dedicated to governmentality and its mechanisms of scientific/rationalist control. Together they comprised a technology of normalization which sought simultaneously to reproduce itself on the basis of its own effects and to regulate the health of the socius through mechanisms of

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<sup>1</sup> "It is possible that the conceptual persona only rarely or allusively appears for himself. Nevertheless, he is there, and however nameless and subterranean, he must always be reconstituted by the reader ... conceptual personae carry out the movements that describe the author's plane of immanence, and they play a part in the very creation of the author's concepts" (What is Philosophy? 63).



quarantine and intervention. Popular expressions of discontent developed along two divergent but complementary trajectories: counter-political demonstrations sought to contest the effects of power, while counter-cultural experimentations and provocations sought new means of producing meaning effects. Contestations of political power tended towards mass protestations against overt forms of political power and claims for inclusion and protection of excluded identity groups. Counter-cultural efforts inaugurated an insurrection against hegemonic forms in art, music, popular culture, and above all lifestyle choices. On one hand, a molar, collective resistance against the form of the law and on the other, a molecular, individuated insurrection against rational modes of understanding the self.

Meanwhile, emergent forms of poststructuralist or postmodernist theory became increasingly focused on the problem finding a way out of the impasse of working within the resources of a language and tradition of thought that seemed to offer only the repetition of the same: the pursuit of the logocentric imperatives of rationalism, truth, and identity with their concomitant dependence on a host of binary oppositions that were becoming increasingly problematic. Furthermore, thinkers like Foucault and Deleuze recuperated Nietzschean thought, leading to a renewed interest in the tools of genealogy, the analysis of differentials of power, and a fundamental

recognition of language, itself, as force. All told, across a wide range of practices of resistance to power (individual, political, theoretical, etc.), it became clear that the primary task for the future was to learn how to become otherwise using the forces as well as the semantics of language, i.e. rhetoric.

As the story is often told of the United States, while counter-political efforts had success in influencing popular opinion and government policies and in securing a wider range of social and legal accommodations for many Other-ed identities, the molecular pursuit of an anti-rationalist politics of the self and the molar politics of resistance were ultimately a dead end. Co-opted through the fetishizations of consumerist markets and often too disorganized and undisciplined to “make a difference,” the Yippies of the 60s are often understood as transforming themselves all too easily into the Yuppies of the 80s.<sup>2</sup> However, it might be more accurate to say that through the encounter with these new modes of resistance and social upheaval, the reactive forces of power increasingly came to reappropriate the means, methods, and mantras of

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<sup>2</sup> Consider 1960s counter-cultural figure, Jerry Rubin. Gaining notoriety as one of the “Chicago Eight,” he went on to become a successful businessman and was eventually eulogized by the New York Times in an article titled, ““Born to be Wild. Scratch That. Born to Be Mild”: “Mr. Rubin was the antic, self-appointed revolutionary of the 1960’s, who with his Yippie sidekick Abbie Hoffman pricked the pomposity of more than a few American institutions, showering the floor of the New York Stock Exchange with dollar bills and campaigning to elect a pig president. But by middle age, Mr. Rubin was promoting networking parties for young professionals and a powdered beverage called Wow. He even worked briefly on Wall Street” (Berger).

counter-culture as the basis for its own operating procedures—reframing affirmations of self as the embrace of consumerist desire and channeling collective dissent into exigencies for a growing obsession with mechanisms of control.

More specifically, the flight from the prohibitions and interventions of the positivist, militaristic state of the Vietnam era led quite naturally to two divergent counter-reactions or re-entrenchments of power in the 1980s: it produced an era of unbridled economic deterritorialization and the investment of individual desire into every possible form of consumerist and speculative excess (with its concomitant disinternments and intensifications of social and economic inequities); and, congruently, on the political level, it led to the reactionary return and reinvestment of molar forms of nationalism, carceral power, and the reinvention of self-sustaining exemplary conflicts (i.e., unwinnable wars) as endemic to a society of control—war on drugs, war on poverty, and eventually, at its close, the war on terror.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “Zarathustra’s visitors do not experience themselves as false higher men, they experience the higher man that they are as something false. The goal itself is missed, fallen short of, not because of insufficient means, but because of its nature, because of the kind of goal that it is. If it is missed it not insofar as it not reached but rather insofar as it is reached it is also missed. The product itself is botched, not because of accidents which happen to it, but because of the activity, the nature of the activity, of which it is the product” (Deleuze, Nietzsche 168).

Ultimately, we might say that the 1960s flight from political and social forms of modernist détente introduced a new modulation of the flows of power which bifurcated along two lines of reactive development: the positivist project of increasingly efficient mechanisms of power (becoming obsessed with control) and the fragmentation of desire and its meaning effects across the space of an increasingly privatized economy of libidinal effects (becoming mad with desire). Power emerges further intensified, more ubiquitous, operating on the basis of a logic by which we are destined to fail only to begin again: it operates through the dual forms of an obligation to truth in which we can never complete a total form of power (true knowledge) or escape the necessity of reproducing a privatized form of our desire (absolute process). Both forms betray of the positive task of becoming otherwise insofar as they posit an unattainable object and thereby achieve the illusion of a static goal; consequently, they are modes of becoming in which the mistakes of the past are destined to repeat themselves as the eternal return of the same.

The perspectives afforded by discourses of truth necessarily read history and culture as failed reactions to problems that had not yet been properly understood.<sup>4</sup> However, they do so only the basis of repressing and

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<sup>4</sup> Nietzsche wants to say that man's species activity or culture only exists as the presumed end result of a becoming-reactive which turns the principle of this activity into a failed product. The dialectic is the movement of activity as such and it too is

retroactively over-coding the affirmative forces through which something new is ever achieved once again. Though becoming otherwise is always conditioned as a response to the constraints of truth, in each of its instances it inevitably unfolds through an irreducible exposure to the future and the unknown. Across the chapters of the present study becoming otherwise variously arrives as an improbable feat of rhetoric, an unavoidable risk of health, an incongruous eruption of possibility, an insoluble dilemma of ethics, and an impossible task of learning.

### **Hence the importance of Nietzsche**

It's not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time. The political question, to sum up, is not error, illusion, alienated consciousness, or ideology; it is truth itself.

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essentially failed and fails essentially. The movement of reappropriations, dialectical activity, is nothing more or less than the becoming-reactive *of* man and *in* man" (Deleuze, Nietzsche 168).

Hence the importance of Nietzsche (Foucault, "Truth and Power" 317).

In Friedrich Nietzsche's remarkable but under discussed course on rhetoric, he points out "there is obviously no unrhetorical 'naturalness' of language to which one could appeal" (Friedrich Nietzsche 21). Yet, Nietzsche hardly despairs of this "loss." Throughout his work, Nietzsche offers a pedagogy for overcoming any need for a "naturalness" of language, instead offering disciplines and techniques for learning to inhabit and transform the practically infinite means of a human becoming unlimited by nature. All available means, including those of philosophy, must then be seen as profoundly rhetorical.

Dissolving rhetoric into philosophy and philosophy into rhetoric, Nietzsche maintains each must be thought in the other to be understood at all. For the paths of thought are such that we only comprehend the arc of our thought by moving through it dually as if in both directions at once; the serpent swallowing its tail: the eternal return. Nietzsche did all this to make of philosophy, finally, a performative art, but in its most rigorous possible sense, as an art of mapping the paths of thought itself to make a philosophy capable of confronting the thought of the outside and affirming its indispensable route,

surface, and interface: rhetoric and the will to power. Nietzsche's world historical project was to deflect the course of western metaphysics in its endless elaborations of Platonism, dialectics, *ressentiment*. He sought to create a sensation with a new song of thought that could not be assimilated to the gregariousness of his day, books "for everyone and no one." On one hand he was anachronism: the greatest sophist since Socrates working his rhetorical spells at the onset of Modernity. On the other, he was so far ahead of his time and so prescient as to prophesize postmodernity, the destruction of molar gregarious values, and the return of a new Sophism.

As a means of introducing the task of becoming otherwise, my dissertation seeks to repeat Nietzsche's thought to produce a series of new differences and to multiply the senses of what his "transvaluation of all values" might mean for rhetorical practices and studies today. Of course, this repetition must occur in two directions at once: the dissertation produces a becoming otherwise of Nietzschean thought as it is decontextualized by application to a variety of heterogeneous domains and retransmitted through the interpretations of his philosophical heirs; congruently, the various problematics presented in each chapter become otherwise due the tropic unconscious influence of Nietzscheanism: the phantasmic seductions of its unique will to power and its continued capacity to adapt itself to futures as yet

unrealized and unknown. Admittedly, Nietzsche's influence is more subterranean than explicit; however, this is undoubtedly as Nietzsche, himself, would have it: he did not seek followers or believers and wished above all things to avoid being monumentalized by history or his readers.

The transvaluation or problematic posed by Nietzsche is the necessity of becoming otherwise than the dual forms of the rule of law as truth and the right to desire as morality—in their stead, he produced cartographies of sense and genealogies of value. Nietzsche described the primary problem of the future as a battle between the reactive forces of *ressentiment* and affirmative forces which would seek to raise human kind to a higher power of affirming and acting through capacities to become otherwise. Properly, the problem he posed was the necessity of the continually renewed choice between forces that seek to constrain possibilities for life and those which seek to multiply them: “Have I been understood? – *Dionysus versus the Crucified*. –” (“*Ecce Homo*” 335). My dissertation produces a serial repetition of this initial choice across a variety of conceptual milieus in order to multiply its effects; each chapter of the dissertation presents a variation on the problem of becoming otherwise and the impossible task that inaugurates its path and occasions its discovery.

As a matter of rhetoric, becoming otherwise is the continually renewed task of creating something new from the resources of language and for the



demands of an ever deferred present—*Presocratics versus Classicists* (Chapter 1).

As a matter of health, becoming otherwise is the necessity of overcoming limitation and suffering in order to achieve new norms of health and pursue the ever changing opportunities of a self-developing capacity for producing new capacities—*Normativity versus Normalization* (Chapter 2). In terms of literature, becoming otherwise is the diagnosis of constraint in the form of the orientations of habit and the contestation of the socializing force of all interpretive schemes as the means of multiplying possibilities for action—*Countergridlock (medicine men) versus Gridlock (priests)* (Chapter 3). As genealogy, becoming otherwise requires the patient examination of the forces of the past that seek to colonize the future in order to discover new modes of ethical subjectivity for the present—*the reoccurrence of the body and the repetition of its difference versus the rule of law and the right to desire* (Chapter 4). As an ecstatic practice, becoming otherwise is the affirmation of the impossible task of discovering a way through fields of force and lines of flight that offer no intelligibility outside of their unfolding paths of discovery and experimentation—*sorcerers versus priests* (Chapter 5). Ultimately, the present dissertation seeks to multiply and intensify available tools for contesting imbrications of power/knowledge, to map a series of ways through reactive formations of thought, to affirm the impossible task of becoming otherwise.

### **Becoming otherwise; a genealogy of impossible tasks**

We begin at the beginning—dissension or disparity, an interruption of habitual states of affairs. The senses of this beginning are multiple or rather bifurcate in a thousand directions at once:

- Before, there was nothing: merely, the unconscious repetition of habitual processes and rhythms of a life sufficient unto itself. Then, a difference arrives from outside of our habitual experience: we encounter it as the failure of a habit, or as an obscure limitation of our ability to function.
- Properly speaking, we always experience beginnings as the suffering of a loss of place. We are no longer at home in our state of affairs, we are compelled to become otherwise by an impossible task (i.e., one for which we do not yet know the solution). The most obvious response is to blame the situation insofar as it is it that has changed and more importantly as a means of circumscribing this sense of displacement.

In the first instance, limitation arrives as a constraint of possible action; it takes the form of an ambiguous choice which requires both the inadequate recollection of a past version of the event and the uncertain anticipation of its potential future resolution: the failed body of habit, and the betrayal of its production of an intolerable difference as effect. The second instance is the recursive impact of this event as it reverses direction and is projected outward; we blame the event itself, betraying it in turn by imagining that it might have turned out differently.

In The Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche argues that we inevitably register limitation or interruption of the unconscious continuity of living (i.e. the encounter with difference) by reproducing it first as a complaint against the situation of life itself (*ressentiment*). However, the negative reaction to the event of becoming otherwise is necessarily futile and leads us to once again refold force against itself. Whereas initially, we regarded only the accident of difference, in the second stage we reproduce the complaint against life as a complaint against the configurations of possibility that led us to the impasse: our habits and their failure (*bad conscience*). However, whether we blame fate or blame ourselves, the necessity of overcoming this difference does not itself change: we must fold force once again.

Eventually, we must reconcile ourselves to the impossible task of becoming otherwise without an expectation of a recognizable success (*acetic ideal*). After all, this reconciliation to the task of becoming otherwise is the passive acceptance of the necessity of repeating a failed habit (what we know how to do) while recognizing that we seek to be betrayed in a new way by its effects (the achievement of what we cannot know how to do). In other words, to accomplish the task of becoming otherwise, we must give up two kinds of desire: the desire to never have had to become otherwise (*ressentiment*), and the desire to never have to become otherwise again (*bad conscience*).

However, it is at this point that we encounter the final danger of becoming otherwise in the form of the dream of the last man: we may seek a perspective from which we can always become otherwise in the same way.<sup>5</sup> In Nietzsche's analysis, the dialectic is precisely the tool of this false victory over the forces of change. If there is no longer an ideal to be pursued or a process which secures the inevitability of success, in its place we may choose to cultivate signs of failure and processes of deracination as higher values in and of themselves (*will to nihilism*). In place of the actual experience of becoming otherwise and the confrontation of its irreducible alterity, the last man

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<sup>5</sup> "I say unto you: one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star ... Alas, the time is coming when man will no longer give birth to a star. Alas, the time of the most despicable man is coming, he that is no longer able to despise himself. Behold, I show you the *last man*!" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke* 17).

overwrites each experience by reference to regimes of signification in order to ensure that each time it means the same thing and in the same way.<sup>6</sup>

The danger in all becomings of the sign are twofold: on the one hand, a sign may be chosen which seeks to totalize or universalize its movement (true knowledge) which not only thereby surrenders itself to all the over-determined forces which led to its production as an effect, but more importantly such an organization is bought at the cost of refusing to measure its own origins which haunt it as an unacknowledged past: an unconscious shadow, a phantasm of a limitlessly undefined other. On the other hand, refusing the imperative of a totalized sign can easily become a commitment of never have done with reinterpreting the smallest effects of the surplus force of its differential—a hermeneutics of the sign (absolute process). Rather than its tyranny as an exemplary event, the sign becomes a force we can never fully conjure away or completely have done with—we can only continue to turn it into something else. Whether we totalize the sign as universal knowledge or pursue it as

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<sup>6</sup> “This false conception of affirmation is still a way of preserving man. As long as being is a burden the reactive man is there to carry it. Where could being be better affirmed than in the desert? And where could man be better preserved. ‘The last man lives the longest.’ Beneath the sun of being he loses even the taste for dying, disappearing into the desert to dream at length of a passive extinction.” (Deleuze, Nietzsche 184).

absolute process, we seek to forget its origins as the price of never forgetting it at all.

The impossible task of becoming otherwise admits of no fixed sign. It offers no imperative that might secure the origins or the effects of our pursuit of new possibilities for living. It requires giving up the hope of an illusory prescience of the product or process by which we will overcome a true dilemma and find a way out of a maladaptive orientation.<sup>7</sup> Becoming otherwise is to redeem past by arriving through chance at a new orientation; it only ever discovers the limit of the previous orientation by passing to the other side of it.<sup>8</sup> For it to have achieved this effect, it must affirm the entire process as a necessity for having realized a new health. Furthermore, this first

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<sup>7</sup> “ ‘If the origin and evolution of life is like incompressible computer algorithm, then, in principle, we can have no compact theory that predicts the details of the unfolding’ ... Kauffman refers here to phenomena that physicist Stephen Wolfram, among others, dubs “irreducible,” algorithms that are likely to be the shortest possible description of themselves. Such algorithms or recipes require a very specific ingredient: futures” (Doyle 14-15).

<sup>8</sup> “To know how to affirm chance is to know how to play ... The bad player counts on several throws of the dice, on a great number of throws. In this way he makes use of causality and probability to produce a combination that he sees as desirable. He posits this combination itself as end to be obtained, hidden behind causality ... To abolish chance by holding it in the grip of causality and finality, to anticipate a result instead of affirming necessity—these are all the operations of the bad player. They have their root in reason, but what is the root of reason? The spirit of revenge, nothing but the spirit of revenge ... That the universe has no purpose, that it has no end to hope for any more than it has causes to be known—this is the certainty necessary to play well” (Deleuze, Nietzsche 26-7).

affirmation must be doubled by a second affirmation in the form of a vitality and enthusiasm for living that looks forward to encountering the challenge of limitation/suffering once again. It is the form of the will to power which forgets or gives up the negative sign of each stage of the process (suffering, culpability, impossibility) in order to seek to become otherwise once again—rather than seeking the achievable in the achieved, becoming otherwise frames an impossible task as a bridge to futures as yet unknown.

### **Theory/Practice**

At one time, practice was considered an application of theory, a consequence; at other times, it had an opposite sense and it was thought to inspire theory, to be indispensable for the creation of future theoretical forms. In any event, their relationship was understood in terms of a process of totalization ... Representation no longer exists; there's only action—theoretical and practical action which serve as relays and form networks ... A theory is exactly like a box of tools (Deleuze and Foucault, "Intellectuals and Power" 205-8).

By first returning to the work of Isocrates in the first chapter, the present study seeks to performatively preempt the traditional division of rhetoric and philosophy, the originary form of the division between theory and practice. After all, this initial division is one in which the forces of rhetoric as the capacity for multiplying possibility becomes framed as a danger that might lead us astray from the obligation to truth and the task of constituting a moral self. The perspective of sophistic rhetoric suggests that there is no right answer to the proper deployment and choice of possibilities offered by the strategies of rhetoric. As Isocrates might say, there is no prescience by which the rhetor can have foreknowledge of the effects of his or her discourse. Rather, the conjectures we make and the lessons we learn always occur in the course of taking action and cannot be properly seen as their solution or secured through a universal method of preparation.

For rhetoric to become something other than an apology for its failure to approach a true science and to escape its abject status as the evasion and perversion true philosophy, it is necessary to deal with the forces of the obligation to truth that continually structure its modes of enunciation as such. While in a critical fashion, a pragmatist approach to contemporary rhetorical theory and practices must eschew and continually thwart the tendencies of the obligation to truth, it must also give up the tendency to totalize or universalize



its own aims and purpose. In other words, it is not enough “remain cognizant” of the interdependence and relationality of theory and practice; rather, one must perform the work of thought and writing in a modality whereby their mutual effectiveness emerges from the uniquely situated problematics they encounter.

Along these lines, each chapter of my dissertation rehearses the obscure but unshakeable problem of becoming otherwise, complicating its potentiality across diverse thresholds and milieus of potential action, until it finally emerges as a series of expressions of the modes by which we might seek out new habits for living. It proposes a set of working principles, or a set of tools: health is overcoming new challenges and producing new habits (chapter 2); rhetoric is a strategy for multiplying possibility (chapter 3); genealogy is a the necessary task of ethics (chapter 4), learning always takes place in through a confrontation of the unknown and the stupefaction of what we already know how to do (chapter 5).

However, these working principles are discovered in the context of specific domains of the inquiry into problematics and exigencies common to everyday life: how does one negotiate the necessity of collaborating with contemporary forms of power, while nonetheless seeking an active role in self-development (chapter 2); how do we find new perspectives of action within the

socializing forces of language and exercise the forces of power on our own orientations (chapter 3); how can we avoid becoming hostage to either the patterns of production (laws of discipline) or the habitual hopes and tropes for the future (forms of desire) that turn the continually renewed possibilities of the future into the frustrated repetitions of an inadequate past (chapter 4); how does one navigate conditions in which rationalist landmarks give way and linear modes of logic become confused—as in the contextual non-grounds of postmodernity and the supple elusiveness of our confrontations with power in societies of control (chapter 5).

As a network or a set of relays, the dissertation habitually encounters a series of problematics addressing them in different guises and resolving them in a variety of ways: the critical deconstruction of foundationalist tendencies and the obligation to truth; the body and its capacities; technologies of power and technologies of the self; disciplines of health; aesthetics of existence; above all, the conditions of possibility for the affirmation of rhetoric, health, and ethics. Though the domains and idioms of analysis in each individual chapter tend to diverge, they are transversally connected theoretically, practically, and thematically. The present study composes these diverse matters into a multiplicity of imbrications of the theory and practice of becoming otherwise and as the means of performing a genealogy of impossible tasks.

## Chapter Summaries

### Chapter 1: Gymnastics of the Soul

In this chapter, I follow the example of both Nietzsche's and Foucault's genealogies by discovering at the emergence of Greek classical rhetoric a disparity and originary dissension of rhetorical thought. In Isocrates, my project reclaims a tradition of rhetoric that is resolutely anti-Platonic though, perhaps, anachronistically so. As Foucault turned to the Greeks in order to discover the origin of the technologies of self that founded the enterprise of the self's work on the self, practices of freedom, and the creation of the ethical subject, I turn to Isocrates in order to reexamine the resources classical rhetoric might provide for us today.

If Isocrates provides us with a uniquely exigent purchase, it is because he denies the classical distinction between rhetoric and philosophy and foregrounds the historically contingent nature of human thought. Instead, he envisions his *philosophia* as a creative process that proceeds by bringing common resources of language (*doxa*) into proximity with unique challenge a given rhetorical situation provides (*kairos*). In other words, he provides a

model for drawing on the resources of history by making them responsive to the particular formations and problematics of an endlessly deferred present.

Certainly, Isocrates, along with other pre-Socratic thinkers, has of late enjoyed renewed interest from contemporary scholars. Notwithstanding this scholarly output, it may seem somewhat strange to place such high value on his thought for rhetoric. However, Isocrates is both interesting and unique for his absolute rejection of the grounds for both Platonic metaphysics and Aristotelian formalism. In their stead, he offers a proto-pragmatism and theory of *philosophia* that mirrors Nietzsche's insistence on the creative movement and value of history. In fact, he posits, as the basis of philosophy, a mode of conjecture which resonates with Nietzschean genealogy in its insistence in the singularity of events even in their repetition. Furthermore, Isocrates foregrounds the sterility of the law, especially as a model for thought, and offers a critique of those who would appeal to it in terms strongly echoing Nietzsche's analysis of *ressentiment*. Together, the critique of metaphysics and an anti-foundationalist approach to the uses of history are the primary points of departure for the larger project.

In his most famous work, "Antidosis," Isocrates sought explicitly to monumentalize his life as an example and as a force that would continue to influence the future. Yet, following his teachings, the body of *doxa* which

comprises history must be brought to bear on the unique exigencies of the present. Thus, if his work is a monument, it is not one that seeks to determine the future, but rather to seduce it. Isocrates, then, should be understood as offering a unique figure for rhetoric which leads us onto futures as yet known in which we may have the grace to discover something other, something more, than the monotony of ourselves.

## Chapter 2: The Right to Life

Broadly conceived, the goals of disability studies have been to contest the social stigmatization of disability, to extend social accommodations, and to counter medical institutional and disciplinary mechanisms that tend to dehumanize and patronize the disabled. One of the intriguing aspects of this project is that it entails attempting to gain access to rights, while simultaneously and necessarily problematizing their foundation and definition. After all, as Foucault argues, identity politics should be understood as an effect of biopower; that is, it constitutes, as subjects, individuals who claim a right to “life,” a claim that relies on the very promises of the form of power that produced them.

The primary promise of the technologies of normalization is the regulation of the health of the individual and the larger populace through intervention and quarantine; its forces seek to exercise the individual as a function and effect of the production of new capacities. In the age of biopower, normativity, that is, the “possibility of transcending the norm, which defines the momentary normal, the possibility of tolerating infractions of the habitual norm and instituting new norms in new situations,” becomes the essence of health (Canguilhem 197). However, this means that health must consist in first encountering infractions of “the habitual norm” which we necessarily experience as pathological, as suffering the limitation of possibilities for action; and, secondarily, we must overcome this suffering and limitation as the means of arriving at a new plateau of health and new possibilities for action. As Nietzsche might say, we must pass through illness and incapacity in order to achieve any worthwhile health or capacity for living.

Undeniably, the fundamental goal of disability studies must be a pragmatic one—to actively transform our shared social environment in ways that will reduce the degree to which individuals may experience the “suffering and limit” that is the essence of the pathological. However, in this pursuit, we must remain cognizant of the increasingly ubiquitous mechanisms of control imbedded in the techniques of intervention and transformation of individual

and social health: “What is at stake, then, is this: how can the growth of capabilities be disconnected from the intensification of power relations?” (Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” 55). As Snyder and Mitchell argue, perhaps, art or literature that involves discovering new modes of “self-knowledge” is one way to begin challenging the modes of subjugation characteristic of disability as an identity. Ultimately, insofar as institutional forces seek to exercise the individual as a function and effect of the production of new capacities, we can only contest the deleterious effects of its influence by seeking an active role in processes of “self-development”; there is no right to life, only the available capacities to claim it—capacities that must continually change.

### Chapter 3: Equipment for Living

Kenneth Burke offers the notions of “perspective by incongruity” and “literature as equipment for living” as models of producing possibilities for becoming otherwise. Echoing the claims of Isocrates, Kenneth Burke argues that the deliberative process of truth is actually an *agon* of competing rhetorical appeals whose ethical value can only be adjudicated on the basis of the effects they would produce for the future. Following the perspective of William

James, belief tends to self-perpetuating; new beliefs are often read as true (corresponding to reality) because they correspond to beliefs we already hold and accurately engage the ways we already experience the world. Insofar as interpretation guides our experience of the world or of an object, it in turn configures our possibilities for action. Furthermore, Burke argues that all attempts to shift perspective through supplanting of an orientation or interpretive scheme are properly understood as appeals that deploy the socializing forces of language in order to configure different possibilities for action.

Burke's sociological criticism of literature as equipment for living focuses on the poet as responding to a situation that is essentially social. Literature serves a therapeutic role insofar as it provides a diagnosis that dissolves old categories and orientations and offers new ones that provide a means of escape from the distressing situation. Burke's notion of perspective by incongruity is the term for a movement in which we push a system of belief or an interpretive scheme to its limits by deliberating creating effects which escape its means of formalization. Ultimately, perspectivism becomes something more than a tool for refining the ways in which we currently experience the world. Rather, it becomes a method for discovering a way out of the orientations which configure experience.



For Burke, in the war of medicine men, of priests and prophets who strive, respectively, to constrain or open up possibilities of life, literature is a powerful ally for the latter. In judging whether the rhetorical appeals or interpretations they offer are medicine or poison, our criteria shall be whether they constrain, narrow, or otherwise limit life, or whether they provide new possibilities, experiences, and configurations of knowledge for living; the question is whether they imply modes of action and existence that are sickly (gridlock) or healthy (counter-gridlock). Ultimately, the artist of discourse assumes the role of a physician of culture who seeks to produce new possibilities for life by multiplying available perspectives for action.

#### Chapter 4: Becoming 'What One Is'

In this chapter, the problem of becoming otherwise is resituated in the context of three distinct movements: Foucaultian, Nietzschean, and Deleuzian/Guattarian. First, following Foucault, I argue that if contemporary forms of power exercise the self through the production of its capacities, genealogy is a necessary tool for becoming otherwise insofar as it provides a way out of the form of an ethical subject that produces itself by means of an obligation to truth. If the Western tradition has been indifferent to pleasure,

obliged us to renounce acts of pleasure in favor of deciphering our desire through first religious and later scientific means, then perhaps technologies of the self could regain their affirmativity by focusing on acts and pleasure, by no longer renouncing the self in favor of some higher power, but rather developing the self on the basis of an aesthetics of creativity.

Second, following Nietzsche, if our task is to seek a mode of self-development that eschews dependence on a higher power (truth and the lie of the ideal), then we must affirm the contingent expressions of chance which constitute our lives as a necessity for becoming otherwise. Nietzsche argues that any narrow sense of a “self,” that seeks a stable identity to bind time in a self-narrative is acting out a reactive force that attempts to seize and freeze the relations of forces of which it is the nexus. Thus, health is an affectivity or responsiveness to change, transformation, and overcoming. Becoming ‘what one is,’ does not mean to discover truth as a metaphysical property of our “self,” nor is it to discover one’s self in the *telos* or mechanism of an ideal law or material mechanism—to “become what one is” requires no longer seeking the self or its health as a predicate, but to affirm them as verbs.

Finally, following Deleuze and Guattari, if we must seek to become otherwise in order to secure a continually renewing health, then we must also refuse both the false security of submitting to the rule of law (Oedipus-lack)

and the false freedom of exercising unrepressed desire (Mother-right). Both modes of becoming are ones in which we are made hostages to history and unconsciously seek the repetition of the same. Ultimately, the only true mode of health posits becoming as a continually renewed problem of movement, rather than the search for a stable platform for identity, right, rule, or desire. It requires, above all, an ethics of transformation; the only ground provided for ethics is one that must continually be reborn otherwise: the reoccurrence of the body and the repetition of its difference.

## Chapter 5: Ecstatic Practice

Carlos Castaneda's The Teachings of don Juan fails before the question: what does it mean? What it *does* is to demand a different kind of reading—to be read as a recipe. Castaneda's text denies the regime of signification (by eliding the question of its own authenticity), casting its readers out along a line of flight of passional apprenticeship. It is a recipe for becoming otherwise insofar as it seduces or seeks to elicit ecstatic flights along trajectories of becoming other-than-human. Furthermore, in Castaneda's work these lines of flight are explicitly situated as therapeutic techniques or experiments that seek

to break down or break through the machinery of Western rationality and humanism.

As in the analysis of Burke's "equipment for living," we are presented with a choice between interpretive schemes that seek to repeat life on the basis of the same and the visions of a medicine man of literature who seeks to provide new possibilities for living; we are offered a choice "between sorcerers and priests." This choice is the text's continually renewed problem, a refrain that echoes, collects, and builds from the moment of its first appearance. Through the persona of "Carlos," Castaneda models the training of apprenticeship, the difficult process of giving up interpretation, authenticity, and rational explanation in his engagement with the instruction of don Juan and learns to manage the terrors of traveling the sorcerer's lines of flight.

Ultimately The Teachings, dramatizes the dilemma of the individual who encounters the impossible task of becoming otherwise without recourse to a law which may be followed or a desire that may be trusted. When faced with the betrayal of both kinds of higher powers (rule of law and right to desire), there is no longer any meaning effect or rational frame sufficient for rendering the experience intelligible. The result is an ecstatic experience of learning that can only be managed through the serial repetition of its exposure to an irreducible unknown and the affirmed anticipation of emergent qualities of

expression across the chance encounters that the series precipitates. Becoming otherwise, like any form of true learning, living, or health, offers no guarantees; in it we find chance affirmed as necessity: the destiny of those who would become otherwise.

**Table 1: CHAPTER AS SERIES**

	<b>Gymnastics of the Soul</b>	<b>Right to Life</b>	<b>Equipment for Living</b>	<b>Becoming 'What One Is'</b>	<b>Ecstatic Practice</b>
Figure/Topic	Rhetoric	Health	Possibility	Ethics	Flight
Function/Effect of the Dilemma	Rhetor	Disabled Individual	Writer	Ethical Subject	Apprentice
Situation/Context of the Dilemma	Foundationalism: Rhetoric contra prescience	Technologies of Power: techniques of normalization	Socializing forces of Language	Technologies of the Self: techniques of subjectivation	Regimes of Signification
Form of the Task	To coordinate the already said of language and the emerging circumstances of rhetorical production	To produce new capacities without further intensifying power relations by seeking an active role in processes of self-development	To diagnose maladaptive orientations/interpretations and multiply available possibilities for action	To affirm the contingency of ethical dilemmas rather than resolve them through submission to law or desire	To manage the ecstatic experiences of learning and the confrontation with the in-between of order/chaos
Form of Health	Creative task: seeking what is new	Normativity: capacity to develop new capacities	Perspectivism: invention of new possibilities for life	Affirmation: responsiveness to change, transformation, overcoming	Betrayal: serial exposure to irreducible unknowns and the emergence of matters of expression

# GYMNASTICS OF THE SOUL

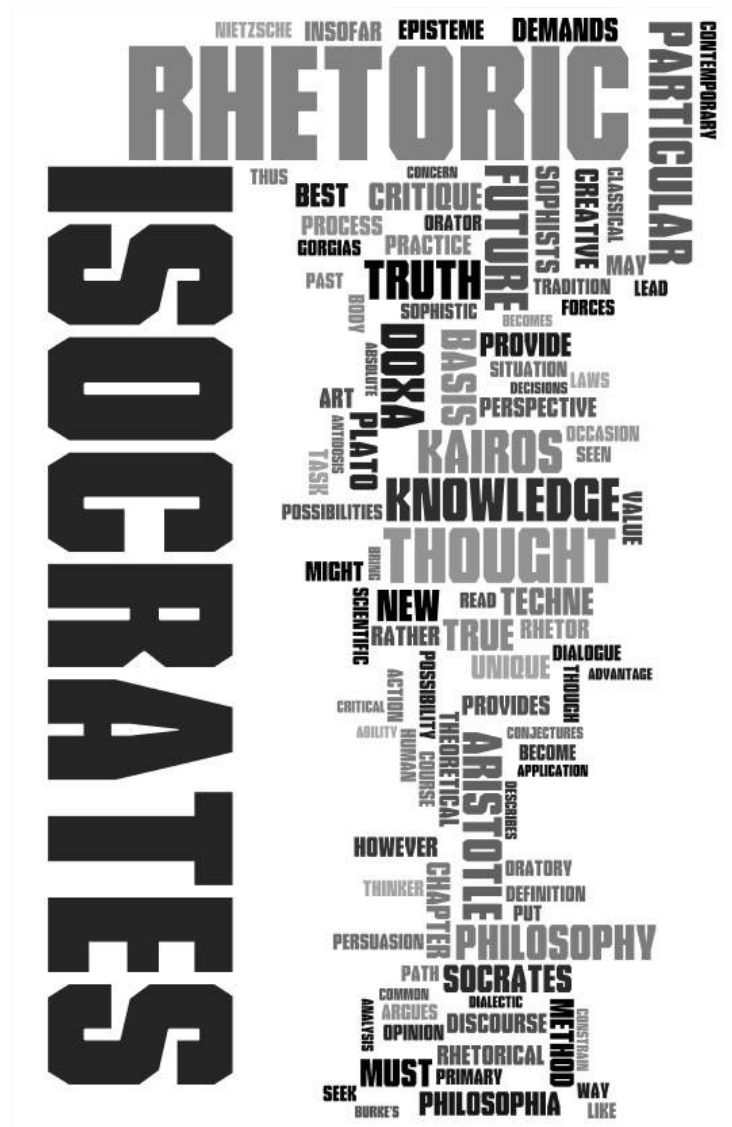


Figure 2: CHAPTER 1

Perhaps the theoretical deterritorialization that has often been evoked as postmodernism, poststructuralism, or post-philosophy (or at least the circumstances they hail—the instability of the subject, the dislocation of transcendental grounds, the repetitive breakdown of rationalist accounts of human thought and action), has been the necessary price or precondition for appreciating Isocrates as something other than a more poetic, if less rigorous thinker of classical rhetoric. Lumped together with Gorgias and the Sophists, Isocrates thought is often read as, at best, a productive and fascinating precursor of the rhetoric and philosophy that culminates or, even better, is purified in Plato and Aristotle. Gradually, contemporary scholars are exploring and recovering the territory and texts of a very different Isocrates. It is enabled by a fundamental rejection of a particular way of reading and understanding his texts: namely, inventing for Isocrates a *techne* (science). After all, it is a bit perverse to foist a *techne* on a thinker who maintains the primacy of *doxa* (common discourse, myth, opinion) as the authentic object of thought, philosophy, and rhetoric. Whether in the guise of an aspiration to certain knowledge or through the refinement and application of a systemic method, Isocrates explicitly and routinely denies the possibility of any trans-historical or transcendental truth.

What distinguishes his thought most acutely from that of Plato and Aristotle is his radical insistence on historicity. It is this anti-foundationalism or proto-pragmatism that leads him to posit both the contingency of all knowledge as *doxa* and the primacy or irreducibility of the demands of the present as *kairos* (timeliness or fitness for the occasion). The following chapter will provide a brief exposition of this fundamental incompatibility of Isocrates and his two foremost classical peers. Though it would be inaccurate historically to read Isocrates work as a direct and sustained critique of Plato and Aristotle, from our contemporary perspective Isocrates work provides a forceful and fascinating challenge to traditional understandings of rhetoric.

### **Isocrates/Socrates**

In “Against the Sophists,” the manifesto that would set the stage for the formation of his school, Isocrates ridicules the pretension to a science (*techne*) of the soul which would claim the authority to transmit a knowledge (*episteme*) of rhetoric, thought, or virtue. Though his immediate target was the excesses and greed of the sophistic tradition of his day, this critique undoubtedly resounds most deeply and cuttingly against the Platonic tradition which would supplant



Isocrates' thought and provide the framework in which he would be read for much of the history of rhetoric.

Whereas Plato's Socrates is critical of myth, *doxa*, and, for that matter, rhetoric, Isocrates denies the basis for a distinction between philosophy as pursuit of the truth and rhetoric as manipulation of the probable, of opinion and belief. Furthermore, Isocrates offers this argument on the basis of myth itself:

For I think it is manifest to all that foreknowledge of future events is not vouchsafed to our human nature, but that we are so far removed from this prescience that Homer, who has been conceded the highest reputation for wisdom, has pictured even the gods at times debating among themselves about the future ("Against the Sophists" 164-5).

This passage is interesting for several reasons. First, it posits the question of knowledge within time. Truth, for Isocrates, could only mean prescience of the future; that is, the attempt to distinguish between the true and the false could only have value insofar as it provides the basis for decisions about the future. The attempt to remove the object of philosophy from the flux of time and history by positing a transcendent ground or ideal realm secures at most its

irrelevance, rendering it a frivolous enterprise. In fact, Isocrates on several occasions derides such pursuits as “verbal wrangling” or “hair-splitting.”

For Isocrates, the movement of thought and the practice of *philosophia* begins with *kairos* or fitness for the occasion. *Doxa* is the body of past experience, opinion, and belief that must be tailored for the exigence or demands of a present circumstance which is irreducibly unique. All thought and oratory must proceed on this basis and with this aim. Thus, this passage operates as a synecdoche of Isocrates thought insofar as it represents the deployment of *doxa* (Homer’s opinion) in response to a specific *kairos* (sophist pretensions to develop a rhetorical science); its effectiveness lies not in its truth but in its appropriateness as a response and critique of a particular circumstance.

Undoubtedly, if the Socratic dialogue, “Gorgias,” were reenacted with Isocrates as its titular personage (and if someone other than Plato wrote the script) the dialogue would unfold quite differently. In Socrates’ critique, the tradition of sophistic rhetoric is found deficient in its lack of an *episteme* or specific body of disciplinary knowledge. Leading Gorgias down the path of sophistic hubris, Socrates is able to elicit the boast that a skilled rhetor can make the weaker case appear the stronger and outmaneuver the expert of any particular art in public discourse. In other words, the rhetor plays on the

opinions, prejudices, and beliefs of common people in order to defeat true knowledge. Thus, sophist rhetoric is revealed as a practice of dissimulation that, at best, indulges in moral relativism and, at worst, is a pernicious source of falsehood that can only lead to the degeneration of its practitioners and listeners. As educators, Sophists were especially insidious insofar as their influence and teaching led to the corruption of young men.

Of course, the broad strokes of this critique of rhetoric existed prior to Socrates and continues to animate contemporary debates; and, as we all know, Socrates himself was found guilty of the latter charge. Ultimately, in the Phaedrus, Socrates would establish a vision of a good rhetoric which imparts true knowledge discovered through philosophy and dialectic for lay audiences. Thus, Plato reconciles philosophy and rhetoric by putting the latter in the service and under the direction of the former. However, we should allow Isocrates to have a word at this point. After all, it is precisely these charges that he levels against himself in “Antidosis”: they are the literary *kairos* which provides the occasion for Isocrates’ extended defense of his teaching and practice of *philosophia*.

In analysis echoing Nietzsche’s critique of the forces of *ressentiment*, Isocrates recognizes the motivation of sycophants and critics of *philosophia* alike as arising from envy. Envious of a skilled orator’s success both public and

personal (indistinguishable in Greek life), Isocrates' describes these critics as "irritated, jealous, perturbed in spirit" like covetous lovers. Rather than practice, these intemperate individuals seek to bring calumny down upon those whose advantage they now decry as unfair.

However, for Isocrates there is nothing unwholesome about this achievement of excellence in thought and word. Rather, if the practice of oratory and *philosophia* may on occasion mislead us, it is not due to an inherent nature but by a failure to reach its aim. Consequently, an orator who misleads his audience does so solely on the basis of the flaws of his character. To put it another way, those who mislead do so only by failing to accurately see the best course. In pursuing a limited advantage at another's expense, such immoral characters fail to recognize that perpetrating an evil will inevitably lead to their own degeneration and downfall. In this sentiment, Isocrates agrees with Socrates' similar analysis in "Gorgias." Yet, rather than seeing this potential for evil as a seduction of rhetoric, a seduction provided by the ability and opportunity to successfully argue for the lesser cause, Isocrates would argue that it is only through a failure of insight or conjecture that such a path would be pursued by a particular orator; the orator himself would have to mistake the lesser advantage for the greater. The mediation of truth is hardly necessary for

this assessment: we are misled when our conjectures lead to a path or action that proves undesirable in its effects.

When put into dialogue with Platonism, Isocrates comes across as rather pragmatic indeed. While it has become clear that he would reject epistemic status for his *philosophia* (i.e., for both rhetoric and philosophy), an important questions remain. How shall the philosopher and orator proceed? Is there a criterion or method for formulating oratory and judging conjectures? If not, then what is left to be discovered in its absence? In order to properly address these questions, Isocrates must be put into dialogue with the great systematizer of classical rhetoric, Aristotle.

### **Isocrates/Aristotle**

One the more celebrated achievements of Aristotle's On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civil Discourse was his classification of rhetoric as a tool or method (*organon*) and as a counterpart (*antistrophos*) to the dialectic. Though Aristotle does recognize rhetoric as partly a practical art comprised of techniques which seek to produce persuasion, his primary definition focuses on rhetoric as theoretical: "Let rhetoric be [defined as] as ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion" (36). Insofar as the Aristotelian rhetor

focuses on seeing or discerning the means of persuasion, the *techné* of rhetoric is comprised of a body of theoretical principles which are then applied to particular situations. Thus, Aristotle provides the foundation for a scientific rhetoric based not so much communicating the findings of philosophy (as it is described in Plato's Phaedrus), but rather by the application of scientific method to the task of persuasion.

While it is doubtful that Isocrates would ever be seen as consonant with Plato, there has been a tendency to subtly shift his views to better accord with Aristotle. Primarily, this has meant reading theoretical underpinnings into his work. In his essay, "Isocrates' Use of Doxa," Takis Poulakos points out, for example, the way in which Isocrates' emphasis on bringing "*doxa* closer to *kairos*" is shifted by the translation in the Loeb edition: "What literally reads in the original as 'bring opinions in proximity to occasions' is rendered by Norlin as 'bring their theories into closer touch with the occasions for applying them'" (63). Perhaps, the tendency to read a brand of nascent Aristotelianism into Isocrates is due to the similarity of their mutual appreciation for *phronesis* or the practical intelligence that provides a "way of exercising one's *doxa*, the process of directing one's conjectures about the future through the past" (73). However, as Poulakos argues, where Isocrates was primarily concerned with

invoking the spirit of past decisions as a guide to *doxa*, Aristotle would posit a dialectic exchange.

Ultimately, on this question Isocrates own testimony proves decisive. In the middle of a long harangue against sophistic excesses, Isocrates ridicules those teachers who “promise to make their students such clever orators that they will not overlook any of the possibilities that the subject affords” (“Against the Sophists” 169). Certainly, this claim resonates with Aristotle’s own definition of rhetoric, though distorted into shallow boast. Yet, I would suggest that there is a critical dissension underlying this passage. The definition that Aristotle offers or adopts inexorably totalizes possibility by positing a theoretical perspective that is not only teachable and consistent, but coextensive with each and every *kairos*. For Isocrates, the particular always escapes the purchase of the general principle, rule, or theory. If *kairos* demands a particular and unique response, then the quickest path to failure in oratory is the application of theory and/or mechanical principles. As Bizzell and Herzberg put it, “to Isocrates, all general principles must fail because they screen out the particulars of a given situation, which must be considered in all truly good moral and rhetorical decisions” (69). In fact, what is particular or unique about each situation is really the primary concern of the Isocratean philosopher/orator insofar as it offers the potential purchase and point of

departure for his highest calling and most difficult achievement: to “seek for what is new” (“Antidosis” 231).

### A Creative Task

As we have seen, Isocrates rejects the foundations of both true knowledge (*episteme*) and the validity anything like a scientific method (*techne*). Through a comparison with both Plato and Aristotle, it has become clear that Isocrates thought departs from and is even hostile to the suppositions of classical rhetoric as it is traditionally understood. The simplest and yet most comprehensive formulation of his unique critical force consolidates this rejection of both *episteme* and *techne*, while coupling it with a new theme – the sterility of the law and the creative task of *philosophia*:

But I marvel when I observe these men setting themselves up as instructors of youth who cannot see that they are applying the analogy of an art with hard and fast rules to a creative process. For, excepting these teachers, who does not know that the art of using letters remains fixed and unchanged, so that we continually and invariably use the same letters for the same



purposes, while exactly the reverse is true of the art of discourse?

("Against the Sophists" 171).

In "Antidosis," Isocrates explicitly contrasts the value of those who "lay down laws" and those who concern themselves with a "broader and worthier cause" (229). While Isocrates praises the benefits which laws provide for society, he also describes them as capable of only repeating themselves. For a thinker who holds so highly the value of *kairos* and the particular, laws can provide can at best merely provide social stability. They offer nothing like the resourcefulness necessary for the philosopher who "by his powers of conjecture must arrive generally at the best course for the future" (335). Bringing *doxa* into proximity with *kairos* is, for Isocrates, an essentially innovative and creative process.

Perhaps in this light, it becomes clearer why Isocrates argues so strenuously against the pretension to foreknowledge of the future. For those who advocate an *episteme* or *techne* for philosophy and rhetoric unnecessarily constrain thought and deliberation by subjecting it to the model of the law. From Isocrates' perspective, the pursuit of transcendent truth is thankfully an impossible folly, for in another sense it might be seen as an absolute horror. If thought could be made to operate on the basis of absolute laws, it would lead to the complete paralysis of human development, the utter inability and

impossibility of meeting the demands of the irreducibly and continually changing exigence of the present.

The pursuit of a transhistorical truth or method is one that seeks to colonize the alterity of the future by reference to metaphysical and universal perspective of judgment. However, as Isocrates teaches us, it can only do so by blinding itself to the radical contingency of human history and thought and by ignoring the unique demands of *kairos*. Long before Nietzsche, Isocrates sensed and attempted to ward off the fragile tyranny of truth.

### **Rhetoric/Health**

For Nietzsche, to make an assessment of Western culture always amounts to questioning it in the following manner: what *can still be created* from the acquisitions of our knowledge, our practices, our customs, our habits? To what degree am I the *beneficiary* or the *victim* or the *dupe* of these habits? ... For Nietzsche, the moral question of knowing what is *true* of *false*, *just* or *unjust* could now be posed in the following terms: What is *sick* or *healthy*? What is *gregarious* or *singular*? (Klossowski 4).

In “Gymnastics of the Soul,” the formulations of Isocratean rhetoric are deployed as a critique against a scientific frame for rhetoric from which its outcomes may be pre-judged as true or false and/or its process may be guaranteed as just or unjust. Against these modes of universalizing or totalizing possibility, Isocrates emphasizes attention to the particular and to the singular compositions of each rhetorical situation in which a rhetor might intervene. Isocrates describes the task of rhetorical thinker as the higher calling and creative effort of producing something new by coordinating the demands of each unique situation (*kairos*) and the resources of common knowledge (*doxa*). In seeking to discover the proper course for the future, the Isocratean rhetor attempts to consider which lessons or habits of the past may prove adaptive and salutary for the future, or similarly which tendencies and predilections may prove maladaptive and constraining of the best outcomes we might seek.

In this formulation, this chapter anticipates and resonates most directly with Chapter 3, “Equipment for Living,” which engages Kenneth Burke’s pragmatist argument that truth is the competition of rhetorical appeals whose value can only be judged on the basis of its effects for the future. In the pragmatist tradition of figures like William James, truth becomes something that “happens to an idea” while new truths are ratified on the basis of their

agreement or harmony with the body of beliefs we already hold. Where the first chapter critiques foundationalist approaches to rhetoric, Burke's analysis carries us a step further by proposing the necessity of meta-criticism in which we recognize that the orientations we hold within language configure our possibilities for action and the means by which we discover new modes of possibility. Burke's primary concern is how to escape maladaptive orientations if these orientations themselves configure our attempts to become otherwise. Ultimately, he argues that achieving a new health and new orientation is the result of a conversion experience through the socializing forces of language. By misnaming the problem, or rather by reinterpreting it from a new perspective, the insolubleness of the dilemma is bypassed — we are converted to a new orientation in which the problem *is* resolvable. In diagnosing the ethical value of a given discourse or interpretive scheme, Burke argues that its ability to multiple available perspective for action is the primary issue.

Summarily, the proto-pragmatism of Isocrates which rejects true knowledge and absolute process as constraining possibilities for seeking what is new becomes in the third chapter the sociological criticism of interpretive structures and the socializing forces of language which similarly must be judged on the basis of whether or not they constrain or open up possibilities for life. However, we might first begin by addressing the political scene or

dilemma of the confrontation with powers that constrain life and the individual who seeks to become healthy.

In the next chapter, this dilemma will be explored in the form of disabled individual who by definition of the gregarious apparatus of technologies of normalization is demarcated as abject and singular. It evokes the starting point of our investigations into the social and political stakes of the combat of forces of interpretation over what might be seen as healthy or sick and the costs and stakes of health in contemporary context of biopower. The disabled individual and his or her confrontation with power provide the initial figure of the necessity of the creative task of becoming otherwise.



It was life more than the law that became the issue of political struggles, even if the latter were formulated through affirmations concerning rights. The “right” to life, to one’s body, to health, to happiness, to the satisfaction of needs, and beyond all the oppressions or “alienations,” the “right” to rediscover what one is and all that one can be, this “right” — which the classical juridical system was utterly incapable of comprehending — was the political response to all these new procedures of power which did not derive, either, from the traditional right of sovereignty (145).

– Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality

Like many of the movements loosely grouped under the under the rubric of cultural or identity politics, disability studies has its origins in the political and social turmoil of the 1960s. Originally an activist movement emerging from within the disability community, it has sought to challenge the paternalism of state administered aid, the objectivizing gaze of the medical establishment, and the social discrimination and stigmatization of disabled individuals in society, generally. For disability activists, the traditional

imperative to “fix” or efface disabled individuals is the hallmark of a modern, normalizing society which has little tolerance or willingness to accommodate the differences of the disabled. Furthermore, for many disabled individuals a “cure” is neither possible and for some may not even be desirable.

Against the normalizing demand for disabled individuals to be adapted to their environments (usually through overcoming their disability or by becoming reconciled to their situation), the disability studies movement has focused on improving quality of life through the transformation of social and physical environments. Supporting and complementing this activism, early disability theorists argued for a distinction between impairment as a medical condition and disability as the effect of a social process:

DS proponents assert that the inability of people with impairments to undertake social activities is a consequence of the erection of barriers by the non-disabled majority. These social barriers—both physical and attitudinal—limit activity and constrain the lives of people with impairment (Thomas 38).

While scholars have analyzed host of ways in which disability is produced, an often cited example is the way in which impairments that limit mobility become a disability in an environment without ramps, elevators, and



automatic doors. When such accommodations are available, the impairment is no longer experienced as disabling.

This social model of disability, as it has come to be known, countered the traditional assumption that disability is the direct result of an individual deficit or incapacity. For disability scholars, disablism describes not only a variety of discriminatory practices but also the way in which disability, as an effect of social oppression, is naturalized through medical and popular discourse as the “symptom” of individual attributes, that is, as the effect of impairments.

Foregrounding the socio-political dimensions of disability and focusing attention on patterns of discrimination allowed disability studies to link itself with other versions of identity politics, which were at the time largely predicated on a “minority-group model” of activism: “From this perspective, the problems faced by disabled citizens are essentially similar to the difficulties encountered by other minorities. The basic issues are prejudice and discrimination evoked by visible or labeled human differences” (Hahn 171). Thus, parallel to the theorization of the social model of disability, there developed a strategy of activism that put forward claims to rights and to protections against discriminatory practices and environments.

By the late 80s, these twin pillars of the early disability studies movement had achieved a significant level of scholarly output and political effectiveness. In the United States, these efforts culminated in the passage of the Disability Act (ADA), in 1990, by the Clinton administration. However, while the ADA has made and continues to make a positive difference in the lives of many Americans with disabilities, two decades of extremely narrow judicial interpretations have effectively eviscerated the original scope and intent of the law.<sup>1</sup> In light of the diminished returns of the ADA, many in the disabilities studies camp have begun to question the efficacy of legislative solutions for the problems facing the disabled and to seek alternative modes of political action.

Concurrently, the social model of disability has come under critique for mirroring the Cartesian dualism of the medical model and ceding study of impairment to medical authority (Hughes 67). More crucially, in the age of biopolitics and poststructuralist critique, a whole series of parallel distinctions

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<sup>1</sup> On this point consider Hahn: "Perhaps more importantly, most appellate courts continue to subscribe to a 'functional limitations' rather than a 'minority group' model of disability. The crucial parts of Section 504 and the ADA which prohibit discrimination against 'otherwise qualified' disabled individuals were interpreted in a highly restrictive manner by US courts. The judges appeared to think that if plaintiffs alleging discrimination were disabled, they could not be 'otherwise qualified.' Conversely, of course, if they were 'otherwise qualified,' they could not be disabled" (172).

that ground the social model have become increasingly problematic: identity/body, discursive/material, social/biological, and thus, disability/impairment. On this theoretical front, recent scholarship has called for a “sociology of body” which would take its cue from the poststructuralist emphasis on the body as a politicized space.<sup>2</sup>

While such a sea change in the theory and practice of disability studies will entail uncertainty and instability for a field just beginning to consolidate itself, it also opens a space to re-evaluate the work that has gone before and to chart new directions for the future. Considering that disability studies is heading in the direction of biopolitics and the sociology of the body, I think it important and fitting to return to the work of Michel Foucault for several reasons. First and foremost, it was Foucault who first explicitly theorized the body as politicized space. In his genealogical studies, Foucault undertook the task to “expose a body totally imprinted by history and by the process of history’s destruction of the body” (“Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” 357). Second, and complementarily, it was Foucault who first characterized the modern social field in terms of biopolitics. As he suggests in the epigraph above, any attempt to understand modern political struggles and the claims of

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<sup>2</sup> For example, see both Hughes (2002) and Thomas (2002).

rights discourse must begin by recognizing such claims as a political response to what he characterized as the triumph of biopower.

As Foucault describes it, biopower is the proper name for the emergence and integrated exercise of both a technology of discipline, which produces docile bodies, and the normative regulation of populations; it takes life itself as the object of its exercise: “One might say that the ancient right to *take* life or *let* live was replaced by a power to *foster* life or *disallow* it the point of death” (The History of Sexuality 138). Through an analysis of the “mechanisms of coercion and elements of knowledge” that are the hallmark of biopower, Foucault’s genealogies seek to discover the shared object and instrument, the correlative of this technology of power (274).

In Discipline and Punish, for example, the correlative of power is the individual. Through discipline, the individual is produced by the manipulation and production (power) and the assessment (knowledge) of individual capacities. In the later work, The History of Sexuality, an introduction, sexuality is the both the effect and shared object of multiple determining elements; as the nexus of an incitement to discourse and the regulation of desire, it is the key element in the intelligibility of a shared strategy.

The shift between these works is between a form of power that produces individuals through institutional dependence and control and the later manifestation which increasingly incites individuals to “know” themselves through their sexuality (i.e., through the ability to “reproduce” the self). While biopower takes life as its object of exercise, it does so by applying itself to the “everyday life categories of the individual”: “it is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word “subject”: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge” (Foucault, “The Subject and Power” 130).

Thus, identity politics should be understood as an effect of biopower; that is, it constitutes, as subjects, individuals who claim a right to “life,” a claim that relies on the very promises of the form of power that produced them. As Wendy Brown argues, in liberal societies such claims are filtered through the discourse of universal human rights:

In this story, the always imminent but increasingly politically manifest failure of liberal universalism to be universal—the transparent fiction of state universality—combines with the increasing individuation of social subjects through capitalist disinternments and disciplinary productions. Together, they breed the emergence of politicized identity rooted in disciplinary

productions but oriented by liberal discourse toward protest against exclusion from a discursive formation of universal justice (58).

Considered from the genealogical perspective such claims and protest are of a piece with the landscape of biopower rather than an effective challenge to it. In the following discussion, my aim is to reevaluate disability studies in terms of the configuration of social relations that have produced disability as identity and motivated claims for social protection.

Toward this end, the first section of this chapter will outline the political costs of rights discourse. In the second section, I will explore the differences between the social model of disability and seek to distinguish Foucaultianism from crude versions of social constructionism. The middle two sections will focus on the technique of normalization and the model of the quarantine in order to gain a better understanding of the forces that have produced disabled identities as their effect. Ultimately, I argue in the final section that we have already moved past a point where rights discourse is the primary front in the battle against disablism. As reform efforts have begun to focus on quality of life issues and “empowering” consumers of health services, we have entered into a new era of grappling with problems unique to societies of control.

## The Failure of Rights Discourse

It has continued to be a commonplace in disability studies to assert that we are all only “temporarily-abled.” One on hand, this points to the likelihood that most of us will experience some form or period of disablement during our lifetimes. On the other, as Eva Kittay points out, even those of us who lead full and healthy lives will experience dependency at least twice, “when we are infants and when we are very old” (Squier 24). At times, this invocation almost seems to suggest that if only the mythical “normal subject” would accept that it too will be disabled someday, then a primary obstacle to the social acceptance and accommodation of disability would disappear.<sup>3</sup>

In this formulation, we might recognize a version of what Jeffrey Nealon characterizes as the theoretical success of identity politics. Namely, the linguistic turn of identity politics arrives at the recognition that “any state of sameness actually *requires* difference in order to structure itself” (4). Yet, the

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<sup>3</sup> Though her analysis and larger argument is far more nuanced than the position I am describing here, Susan Wendell does offer a clearly stated example of this type of argument: “If the able-bodied saw the disabled as potentially themselves or as their future selves, they would be more inclined to feel that society should be organized to provide the resources that would make disabled people fully integrated and contributing members” (Wendell 266).

realization a common intersubjective ground to social and linguistic identity formation does not entail a political success. As Nealon goes on to argue,

because intersubjective theories argue that we *need* each other for recognition and happiness, such theories continue to harbor a regulatory ideal of complete subjective freedom, which is actually *freedom from recognition, freedom from difference itself*. It is not necessarily surprising, then, that needing the other often shows itself as resenting the other (7).

Insofar as a cultural politics is thematized through reference to a lack, a failure of wholeness, and the instability of identity in the same, it tends to reinscribe as an object of desire the very privileges it seeks to deconstruct. Thus, identity politics has often been haunted by the unacknowledged goal of attaining the privileges from which it is excluded and thereby maintains as ideal the configuration of power relations that produce these politicized identities as effects (Brown 7).

More generally, the problem with rights discourse is that appeals to a liberal notion of equality that “ insofar as it neither constitutes political community nor achieves substantive equality, guarantees only that all individuals will be treated *as if* they were sovereign and isolated individuals” (110). As Brown argues, the formal equality of liberalism abandons the



individual to the social forces that produce him or her as a politicized identity. Thus, the problem with rights discourse and the desire to seek melioration within its institutions is that “[it] continuously recolonizes political identity as political interest—a conversion that recasts politicized identity’s substantive (and often deconstructive) cultural claims and critiques as generic claims of particularism endemic to universalist political culture” (59). Along these lines, we might consider the way in which an identity such as the “welfare subject” is produced and regulated through categories of “motherhood, disability, race, age, and so forth.” While such subjects seek the intervention of the state, that is, a political solution for social inequity, the response is further reform and administration by the institutions that produced these subjects as effects. In other words, the entire system becomes a closed circuit: “Thus, disciplinary power politically neutralizes entitlement claims generated by liberal individuation, while liberalism politically neutralizes rights claims generated by disciplinary identities” (59).

For example, political efforts to address racism culminate in affirmative action legislation which in turn becomes a mean of regulating ethnic identities through institutional and legal procedures. This effectively shifts debates and conflicts over racism from a political issue to one addressed in the educational system and through workplace litigation. At the same time, conservatives

characterize such programs as reverse discrimination that unfairly provide “rewards” based on characteristics (i.e. race) to which the government should be blind. This is a two-stage process whereby political claims against social inequalities are depoliticized and privatized through disciplinary administration and the logic of formal justice.

This pattern holds equally true for the disability movement. Though intended to politically contest social inequalities pertaining both to the allocation of resources and the self determination of the disabled, measures such as the ADA ultimately depoliticize and privatize these claims by reinserting them into the purview of judicial institutions: “It converts social problems into matters of individualized, dehistoricized injury and entitlement, into matters in which there is no harm if there is no agent and not tangibly violated subject” (124). Furthermore, such measures not only neutralize political claims as private interest, but through bureaucratic codification reify the subject categories that are meant to protect and serve as a means of further disciplinary regulation.

In consideration of the latter claim, it is important to recognize the way in forms of disciplinary discourses imply and reinforce one another. Historically, this has been particularly true of the relationship between medical and judicial discourse. In his lecture series on this very topic, Foucault

reiterates the fundamental thesis of much of his work, that power is productive, that it “multiplies itself on the basis of its own effects” and operates primarily through the “formation of knowledge” (Abnormal 48). As disability scholars have pointed out, a primary aspect of court decisions pertaining to disability has been the reliance on medical knowledge. As Hahn points out, “courts have viewed medical evidence of a functional impairment as an essential pre-condition for legal findings about disability” (Hahn 185).

More pointedly, even legislation designed specifically to aid and accommodate the disabled is often administered in ways that undermine its positive impact. For example, in her critique of the questionnaire that determines eligibility for the Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Margit Shildrick characterizes the way in which state administered aid becomes an opportunity for oppressive surveillance: “No area of bodily functioning escapes the requirement of total visibility, and further the ever more detailed subdivision of bodily behavior into a set of discontinuous functions speaks to a fetishistic fragmentation of the embodied person” (Qtd. in Hughes 69).

As I discussed in the introduction, the initial goal of disability activism was to contest the traditional view of disability as a private problem that should be ameliorated by the attempt to adapt disabled bodies to a normalizing society. It is thus, ironic, that the discourse of rights through

which such claims have been advanced is in Brown's analysis a further mechanism of depoliticizing difference as private; the appeal to rights and their codification may actually deepen the social injuries it seeks to address.

### Social (Mis)Construction

... I do not envision a "history of mentalities" that would take account of bodies only through the manner in which they have been perceived and given meaning and value; but a "history of bodies" and the manner in which what is most material and most vital in them has been invested (Foucault, The History of Sexuality 152).

Whether it is fair to call Foucault a social constructionist or not, the critiques against both are similar. Generally, the accusation is that these theories elide "real" bodies by relying on a top down, representative mode of power that constitutes subjects as its effects.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the description is

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<sup>4</sup> For example: "While Mitchell, Snyder, and Thomson focus their critique of postmodern body theory on the reliance of that theory upon the disabled body as a constitutive Other, Susan Wendell is concerned that postmodern theories focus too exclusively upon the body-as-construction and thus elide the lived experience of

problematic and symptomatic of a broader tendency to read Foucault as primarily offering a discursive or even worse a linguistic account of the body. Yet, it is nonetheless fairly pervasive. It is based on this formulation that scholars like Tobin Siebers critique social constructionist theory and Foucault as eliding the impaired body of the disabled.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps, this issue can best be approached through a critique of what is often equated with a social constructionist approach to disability studies—the social model of disability. To reiterate, this model distinguishes between impairment as the physical or biological fact and disability as the “social process that turns an impairment into a negative by creating barriers to access” (Davis, *Bending over Backwards* 12).

An essential problem of the social model is that is often deployed as a way of suggesting that disability has a unique and essential otherness insofar as it is predicated on physical difference. However, even social constructionists are thought to elide this difference by focusing on the

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‘actual’ bodies, particularly the ‘negative body,’ i.e., the body which is disabled, ill, or suffering” (Samuels 70).

<sup>5</sup> “Biopower determines for Foucault the way that human subjects experience the materiality of their bodies. The human subject has no body, nor does the subject exist, prior to its subjection as representation. Bodies are linguistic effects driven, first, by the order of representation itself and, second, by the entire array of social ideologies dependent on this order” (Siebers 739).

construction of disability and ignoring the material reality of pain: “Disability scholars have begun to insist that strong constructionism either fails to account for the difficult physical realities faced by people with disabilities or presents their body in ways that are conventional, conformist, and unrecognizable to them” (Siebers 740). Yet, far from failing to recognize the body, Foucault suggests that these “difficult physical realities” cannot be postulated as the ground of a transhistorical body which would preclude any essential authenticity of impairment prior to social construction:

We believe, in any event, that the body obeys the exclusive laws of physiology, and that it escapes the influence of history, but this too is false. The body is molded by a great many distinct regimes; it is broken down by the rhythms of work, rest, and holidays; it is poisoned by food or values, through eating habits or moral laws; it constructs resistances ... Nothing in man—not even his body—is sufficiently stable to serve as the basis for self-recognition or for understanding other men (Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” 360).

For Foucault, power never elides the body, but rather invests it through techniques that are essentially productive. On the one hand, this productivity may be linked to the production of knowledge. On the other, it is linked to the

development and increase of individual capacities: “deployments of power are directly connected to the body—to bodies, functions, physiological processes, sensations, and pleasures; far from the body having to be effaced, what is needed it to make it visible” (Foucault, The History of Sexuality 151-2). As forms of sovereign power have gradually receded and biopower has emerged, it has become increasingly suspect to conceive of power as a merely ideological phenomenon, as an order of representation, or as oppressing an essential body that exists outside history and relations of power.

While social constructionism is often critiqued as basing its theories on an elision of the material disabled body, such critiques are predicated on a version of social constructionism that is essentially discursive or ideological in scope. While this may true of some theorists, it is certainly not true of Foucault. In fact, he explicitly rejects symbolic or representative theories of power. Power is not a shimmering surface on reality, nor is it a monolithic “Power.” Rather, Foucault describes a power that invests, produces, and operates through and on material bodies. However, this is not to say that there is stable, physiological foundation upon which power operates—even the body

is contingent upon relations of force. For Foucault, there is no outside to relations of power—socially, materially, or otherwise.<sup>6</sup>

Such a recognition unsettles attempts to describe social inequities primarily in terms of exclusion, prohibition, or by the interdiction of the law. In one of Foucault's most famous formulations, power is no longer on the model of the exclusion of lepers, but the quarantine, surveillance, and regulation of the plague: "Rather than the massive, binary division between one set of people and another, it called for multiple separations, individualizing distributions, an organization in depth of surveillance and control, an intensification and a ramification of power" (Discipline and Punish 198). Under the quarantine model, the prohibitive function of the law is replaced with a process of normalization that seeks to maximize the life of both the individual and the species:

Such a power has to qualify, measure, appraise, hierarchize, rather than display itself in its murderous splendor; it does not have to draw the line that separates the enemies of the sovereign from his obedient subjects; it effects distributions around the norm ... (Foucault, The History of Sexuality 144).

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<sup>6</sup> For a more in depth discussion of this point, consider the interview "The Ethics of the Concern for the Self." Here, Foucault points out that freedom is a condition of the existence of relations of power.



If oppressed groups are no longer excluded as enemies, they are now seen as threats to the health of the body politic. Thus, the danger becomes endemic to a “society must be defended.” It is in this aim that biopower’s racism is founded. It is toward this end that the norm becomes so crucial. In administering the life of both the society and the individual, in terms of both social deviance and pathological dysfunction, the norm is the common tool: “The norm is something that can be applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population one wishes to regularize” (Foucault, Society Must Be Defended 252-3).

### **The Normalizing Technology**

[T]he norm is not at all defined as a natural law but rather by the exacting and coercive role it can perform in the domains in which it is applied. The norm consequently lays claim to power ... Canguilhem called it a polemical concept ... The norm brings with a principle of both qualification and correction. The norm’s function is not to exclude and reject. Rather, it is always linked to a positive technique of intervention and transformation, to a sort of normative project (Foucault, Abnormal 50).

One of Foucault's teachers, Georges Canguilhem provides a helpful introduction into Foucault's analysis of the normalizing regime of truth. In The Normal and the Pathological, Canguilhem traces the epistemological development of his titular concepts through the work of thinkers like Broussais, Claude Bernard, and Auguste Comte. The foundation of a vitalist paradigm of health begins with Broussais' whose contribution was to define "all diseases as consisting essentially 'in the excess or lack of excitation in the various tissues above or below the degree established as the norm'" (47-8). The importance of this principle is that it denies the ontological difference of health and disease; health and sickness became different in degree rather than in kind.

However, Canguilhem goes on to argue that deviations from the norm should be recognized as pathological only insofar as they diminish the vitality of the organism; health is no longer defined as the absence of sickness or pathological symptoms. Rather, normativity, that is, the "possibility of transcending the norm, which defines the momentary normal, the possibility of tolerating infractions of the habitual norm and instituting new norms in new situations," becomes the essence of health (197).

For scholars like Snyder and Mitchell, Canguilhem's value lies in his critique of the norm as a tool of medical and social judgment. In the following

passage, dysfunction is revealed as a term that imbeds an evaluative judgment of a given deviation from the norm as pathological:

Canguilhem argued that *anomaly* offered medicine a more appropriate gauge than *dysfunction* because it surrendered the violence of evaluation that infused any notion of deviance ...

Rather than interpret bodily and cognitive differences in terms of their degree of deviation from a standardized norm, anomaly recognized difference as the neutral expression of a biologically diverse species adapting to the pressures of environmental and internal forces (Snyder and Mitchell 373).

The key here is that if health is the experience of normativity (the ability to establish new norms), then any standardized norm (social or biological) has no basis for automatic preference from a scientific standpoint. Health cannot be measured by a fixed standard or set of norms.

Canguilhem's work provides an additional ground for recognizing that disability is socially constructed. Not only are judgments of health ethically suspect when based on prescribed standards, but pathology is instead descriptive of a "reduction of the individual's possibilities for interactions with its environment, which is felt as the experience of suffering and limit" (Margee 304). Depending on the available accommodations or context, a given

impairment or biological or social anomaly need not necessarily be experienced as pathological and may even prove adaptive. Of course, this would support the argument that disability results from a lack of adequate social support.

However Canguilhem goes a step further in arguing that “even apparently biological facts such as human height and life span are ‘inseparably biological and social’” (Margee 305). There are any number of ways in which social forces shape the environments in which norms are established. The effects of technology and industry can contribute to physiological anomalies. For example, the prevalence of carcinogens contributes to cancer and pollution may cause respiratory illness. However, this would also include the environment of cultural practices. Fast food culture leads to an increase in rates of obesity and diabetes. Thus, the experience of disability is not only constructed by social forces insofar as they contribute to whether or not a given impairment is experienced as limiting, but the various physiological or psychological anomalies described by the term impairment are themselves socially conditioned. It is partially in this sense that Foucault can declare, in the spirit of Nietzsche: “the body is molded by a great many distinct regimes.”

Canguilhem’s work provides additional weight to critiques of the social model of disability. If disability and impairment (referring to social

stigmatization or lack of accommodation and physiological or psychological anomaly respectively) are both products of social forces, then social construction cannot be described as a solely discursive or purely interpellative phenomenon. In other words, the social model of disability which maintains a distinction between the social (disability) and the material (impairment) is untenable. Rather, the body is penetrated thoroughly and effectively by force and thereby enmeshed in relations of power. Foucault's innovation is to recognize that, through these relations of power, forms of subjectivity are constituted as objects to be studied and sites of the application of techniques of power. For Canguilhem norms are polemical concept; for Foucault they are a "technique of intervention."

As a regime of truth, normalization identifies and fixes individuals bodies amongst populations as fully and exactly as possible. The norm is not a tool of exclusion but of quarantine; for Foucault, quarantine means surveillance and observation. Norms "effect distributions" as a means of making bodies "visible" and are tools which take as their object and instrument individuals and subjectivities. Deployed to defend the health of society and the individual, the norm operates seamlessly to diagnose and regulate both social and physiological deviance. Though this shared technique

of power/knowledge criminality, illness, physical impairment become linked; thus, all abnormalities become pathologized.

### The Racism of Biopower

[D]eath now becomes the moment when the individual escapes all power, falls back on himself and retreat, so to speak, into his own privacy. Power no longer recognizes death. Power literally ignores death (Foucault, Society Must Be Defended 248).

... the disabled body represents the incomplete, unbounded, compromised, and subjected body susceptible to external forces: property badly managed, a fortress inadequately defended, a self helplessly violated (Thomson 45).

In Society Must Be Defended, Foucault explicates the stakes and implications of the protective role biopower establishes for itself. For a form of power that takes life as its object, incapacity and death pose the essential problem: "Death was now something permanent, something that slips into life, perpetually gnaws at it, diminishes it and weakens it" (243-4). Under the

regime of biopower, it would seem that the closer one approaches death—the extinction of life and the limit of power's grasp—the more one is excluded, ignored, left out. As in death, illness is private. For the disabled, insofar as they are deemed to lack capacity, they are less available to a power that operates primarily on capacities. In this sense, incapacity would seem to simultaneously shield the individual from power and yet leave them outside the care of society—hardly a bargain.

Certainly, such a description would fit with analyses that emphasize the way in which disabled bodies are elided and excluded in an ableist society. In this sense, the right of biopower to make live or let die is exercised through the tools of social normalization and the judgment of diagnosis: “What in fact is racism? It is primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die” (Foucault, Society Must Be Defended 254-5). Undeniably this has been the experience for many individuals. As a threat to the health of the social body, the disabled have often suffered from moral judgment, social exclusion, and even attempts at elimination.

However, while it is true we may recognize a “kind of ‘metapower’ structured essentially around a certain number of great prohibition functions,” it can “only take hold and secure its footing where it is rooted in a whole series

of multiple and indefinite power relations that supply the necessary basis for the great negative forms of power” (Foucault, “Truth and Power” 309-10). Any attempt to analyze or contest the state of oppressed groups or identities, must begin by recognizing that they are produced by a “microphysics” of power that is essentially productive and operates by constituting subjectivities as the simultaneous object and instrument of its exercise of knowledge/power.

In the case of the disabled individual, norms are the primary tool or technique of this microphysics. They play such a crucial role because they link interventions at two levels: the regulation of populations—birth rate, crime, disease—and direct interventions in the health of the individual. Norms also constitute new form of law that becomes a tool for correcting social deviance and a tool of functional regulation in health. In other words, the norm is both a rule of conduct and a tool for the administration of dysfunction and pathology (Foucault, Abnormal 162). In the age of biopower, the great push is for fuller extension of power across the whole of the social body—seeking to penetrate it as deeply and efficiently as possible. The positivist administration of health produces a normalizing spectrum that seeks not only to wield evaluative judgment and exert a regulative influence, but more importantly to map the whole of social terrain along this continuum.



Thus, though biopower utilizes a polemic deployment of the norm to introduce a differential value to life and lives, the goal is not exclusion and prohibition, but to intervene and transform these lives through productive techniques:

[The Classical Age] invented a technique of power that does not act by excluding but rather through a close and analytical inclusion of elements, a power that does not act by separating into large diffused masses, but by distributing according to differential individualities, a power linked not to ignorance but rather to a series of mechanisms that secure the formation, investment, accumulation, and growth of knowledge (Foucault, Abnormal 48).

Insofar, as biopower seeks to invest the whole of social field, observation and intervention must become increasingly detailed so and invest life as completely as possible to the ultimate limit of death. The development of the great machineries of quarantine were fueled not by the necessity of better containing the disabled and the criminal, but by the need to extend its exercise of power as completely as possible. Forms of surveillance, examination, and observation attempted to discover disease wherever it might lurk and to classify and diagnose pathological symptoms with as great of acuity as possible.

Rather than working on the body wholesale, medicine sought to know and regulate its functions in increasingly differentiated ways.<sup>7</sup> Even while aspects or capacities of a person's health and body are analytically deracinated from the whole, these regimes of knowledge and techniques of discipline are the means by which individuals and subjects are constituted:

The examination as the fixing, at once ritual and 'scientific,' of individual differences, as the pinning down of each individual in his own particularity ... indicates the appearance of a new modality of power in which each individual receives as his status his own individuality, and in which he is linked by his status to the features, the measurements, the gaps, the 'marks' that characterize him and make him a 'case' (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 192).

Thus, a failure of classification, intervention, and diagnosis is the degree to which a person remains obscure, unobserved, and untrained—the extent to which a person is “let die.”

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<sup>7</sup> The following passage is descriptive of disciplinary technology in general: “... it was not a question of treating the body, *en masse*, ‘wholesale,’ as if it were an indissociable unity, but of working it ‘retail,’ individually; of exercising upon it a subtle coercion, of obtaining holds upon it at the level of the mechanism itself—movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity: an infinitesimal power over the active body” (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 137).

Ultimately, the analytical inclusion and observation of disability under biopower comes at a cost. The hallmark of institutionalized medicine is that rather than eliminating disease, illness, and the experience of the pathological, it seeks to reify, deepen, and sustain the individuals it creates. Speaking of infantile sexuality, Foucault points to this positive technique as the key difference between the productive forms of biopower that emerged in place of the prohibitions of sovereignty. Considering our analysis thus far, the following passage is equally relevant for disability:

On the surface, what appears in both cases is an effort at elimination that was always destined to fail and always constrained to begin again. But the prohibition of “incests” attempted to reach its objective through an asymptomatic decrease in the thing it condemned, whereas the control of infantile sexuality hoped to reach it through a simultaneous propagation of its own power and of the object on which it was brought to bear (The History of Sexuality 41-2).

Such a recognition leads to a different focus for disability studies. The central question is not why the normal fail to recognize their common interest in issues of disability. Nor is the question why people with disabilities have been excluded and ignored. Rather, in light of our engagement with Foucault, the

question becomes one of understanding the ways in which disability is sustained, constituted, and reified by the technology of the normalization and institutions of quarantine.

Undeniably, the fundamental goal of disability studies must be a pragmatic one—to actively transform our shared social environment in ways that will reduce the degree to which individuals may experience the “suffering and limit” that is the essence of the pathological. However, in this pursuit, we must remain cognizant of the increasingly ubiquitous mechanisms of control imbedded in the techniques of intervention and transformation of individual and social health: “What is at stake, then, is this: how can the growth of capabilities be disconnected from the intensification of power relations?” (Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” 55).

### **Institutional Critique and Continued Dangers**

Thus, a particular group of people like those labeled mentally retarded are removed from the general social and economic context; categories of learning deficiency or social friction are differentiated and refined; particular techniques are then devised

for intervening at particular physical, behavioral, or cognitive points (Trent 274).

Thus, as the more repressive, obviously controlling goals of self-discipline or even symptom reduction recede from view, the madman becomes more like an under-skilled laborer than an ill patient, more in need of rehabilitation than treatment, and more an object of technology than a specter of fear. The body becomes controllable through its own productivity, and this culturally congruent emphasis on production—be it of skills, data, or training programs—replaces the more ambivalent desire to exert physical and even psychological control (Lilleleht 174).

There are good reasons why institutional critique plays such a central role in disability studies. After all, medical disciplines and institutions both configure material and social contexts for the actions of individuals, but also discursively shape the identity of individuals with disabilities through the authority of scientific knowledge. Over the course of the last several decades, critique of medical institutions has sought to limit the degree of control those with disabilities or illnesses must encounter when they seek medical care.

Concretely, this has meant challenging the “dominance of the expert in decision making by emphasizing the right of the most objective and rational standpoint to take precedence in any decision situation” (Gatens-Robinson and Tarvydas 28).

While healthcare continues to be dominated by the expert status of the physician or medical provider, the movement and critique has had some success. For example, consumer directed rehabilitation attempts to change this relationship by ceding to the agency of the consumer or patient. Developing over the course of the last decade, this movement begins with the assumption that “if people with disabilities are to experience personal satisfaction and quality of life, they must play the central role in directing the disability policy and rehabilitation service delivery that are central to their empowerment” (Kosciulek, et al). On the surface this shift appears wholly positive. It values the experience and desire of the individual and relinquishes as much autonomy as possible to the patient. Prior to this shift, the focus of rehabilitation had been on the cultural and institutional imperative of independence. Since the shift, the central issue is quality of life; however it might be determined or defined by the individual. Certainly, this would seem on the surface to provide a way of improving individual capability without intensifying relations of power. However, it is important to recognize that this

relationship (of consumer directed rehabilitation) is one in which the “consumer’s” relationship to him or herself is directly managed through the mediation of the caregiver.

Even while the goal of training may be supplied by the individual, the coercion of training lies in its method. The procedures, documents, and progress reports accompanying rehabilitation merely lighten the operation of observation and training. As Erica Lilleleht argues in her Foucaultian critique of contemporary psychiatric rehabilitation, in the kinder, gentler version of treatment “overtly controlling observation loses its physical basis and becomes increasingly detailed and dehumanized” (177).

Though an individual consumer may choose the goals of their rehabilitation or treatment, ultimately they are broken down into step-by-step procedures that exert a form of control that is more deeply imbedded than previous forms of treatment:

... even though this approach does not attempt to cure, or even treat, mental illness psychiatric rehabilitation does seek to redevelop the skills of the chronically mentally ill and to help them become integrated participants in a production-oriented society. In attempting this, however, it relies on technologies so minute in focus, detailed in application, and depersonalizing in

experience (in other words, so disciplinary in form) that it risks making skill development a perpetual and strangely disconnecting process. Thus, just as the schizophrenic may never be completely cured of his mental illness, so too might he never be done with his rehabilitation (179).

For Lilleleht, the reforms of rehabilitation merely offer a lightening and intensification of techniques of power. The goal is no longer to cure or fix any form of deviance, but to isolate and regulate it. Less and less do individuals find themselves simply excluded by power; and, concomitantly, there is less and less of an impetus to strictly mold individuals to fit a standard. While it is true that deviance from the norm provokes constraint and correction, normalization will be a process that takes as its aim the pursuit of an ever extending normativity—the ability to produce new norms of health. The judgments of power, its diagnostic spectrums, classifications, and interventions become increasingly regulatory in nature.

Consequently, the contemporary landscape that disability studies must confront is that of the society of control. Echoing the dilemma of Lilleleht's schizophrenic, Gilles Deleuze describes the society of control as one in which "one is never finished with anything":



The *apparent acquittal* of the disciplinary societies (between two incarcerations); and the *limitless postponements* of the societies of control (in continuous variation) are two very different modes of juridical life, and if our law is hesitant, itself in crisis, it's because we are leaving one in order to enter the other ("Postscript" 5).

Though they may appear on the surface to empower individuals, contemporary procedures of knowledge production and mechanisms of control only solidify relations of power at a deeper level by involving individuals as "consumers." In the society of control, we are not only incited to discover the "truth" of our identity and to be subjugated thereby; we are also induced to pursue a program of rehabilitation that would secure a new foundation for our always, already displaced abject identities. In other words, the productive moment in the society of control is not solely the constitution of the individual as object for disciplinary examination, but the injunction for individuals to experiment and objectify themselves in the pursuit of ever evolving forms of normativity and health. In such circumstances, political theory and practice must increasingly concern itself with the space of the self or subject. As power is exercised through the individual's relationship to him or herself, then the attempt to create practices of freedom must necessarily begin there as well. Ultimately, in this context, Foucault provides an important

basis for critique of not only institutions, but of reform efforts as well. As Lilleleht's analysis attests, even well-intentioned reforms like consumer directed rehabilitation require close scrutiny.

### **Becoming Otherwise**

Of course, no one wants the social stigma associated with disability, but social recognition of disability determines the practical help a person receives from doctors, government agencies, insurance companies, charity organizations, and often from family and friends (Wendell 264).

Though the primary goal of this chapter has been a historical-critical understanding of the ways in which biopower has sought to grasp or circumscribe the human differences associated with disability, it is also important to recognize that those with disabilities have generally benefited from these "advances." One of the most perplexing aspects of disability issues is that it is difficult to imagine doing without these forms of intervention. Yet, this only foregrounds the fact that disabled individuals are uniquely vulnerable to the control of disciplinary mechanisms through their dependence

on medical care and intervention. What makes contemporary forms of power so insidious is that they *are* productive. While political accommodations extended through legislation and medical care is clearly valuable and necessary, they are clearly problematic to the degree that they have been structured as paternalistic; that is, interventions to improve the health or quality of life of the individual are often administered in ways that imbed forms of control and governance.

In structuring the possible field of others, these disciplines not only configure material and social contexts for the actions of individuals, but discursively shape the identity of individuals with disabilities through the authority of scientific knowledge. Undoubtedly, this is the reason why a great deal of critique has focused on disciplines and institutions. In a very sober account of the current state of disability studies, Snyder and Mitchell support the value of disciplinary critique as it has been made through the work of Foucault for one. However, they also point to a need for speaking to the experience of disability:

The theoretical diagnosis had been limited to an archaeology of institutional power that sought artificially to stabilize meanings of the body. To narrate a phenomenology of the body requires an approach that can capture its defining elasticity—not as an

established fact, but rather as a mutable, temporal, "first-person" organism. Such is the domain of literature and art (381-2).

The point is not to recover some authentic self prior to relations of power, but rather to reconfigure our status as subjects through the manipulation of our relation to our selves. Certainly, art or literature that involves discovering new modes of "self-knowledge" is one way to begin challenging the modes of subjugation characteristic of disability as an identity.

Through Foucault, we should recognize that the call for a "right to health" emerges along with the disciplinary forms of governmentality that increasingly structure relationships of the self to the self. Ultimately, the struggle against the modes of subjugation concomitant with institutional attempts to ameliorate conditions of "suffering and limit" should be recognized as a crucial aspect of the experience of disability:

The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to try to liberate the individual from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization linked to the state (Foucault, "The Subject and Power" 134).

Individual human beings have never been and will never be completely independent; they will never exist outside of relations of power. Similarly, dependence on disciplinary forms of care will continue to be a fact of life for many. Thus, disability studies should focus on critique of disciplines and institutions as a means of challenging the degree of control involved in relations of dependence, along with attempts to discover new modes of subjectivity or forms of self-knowledge—ultimately, to challenge the ways in which we are subjugated through and made subject to technologies of normalization.

### **Health/Possibility**

The first shoots of fecundity, insofar as they are a sign of health and promote vigour and resistance, initially have the character of *sickness*. The first explosion of forces and will to self-determination is a sickness that can destroy humanity; and even more sickly are the first, strange, and will attempts of the mind to adjust the world to itself, to its own authority (Nietzsche Qtd. in Klossowski 4-5).

The dilemma of the disabled individual is resonant with a host of issues explored across the present study. As Nietzsche argues in the epigraph, health emerges out of the symptoms of sickness. Across the dissertation, this basic point is argued in innumerable ways. In the introduction, we encounter this formulation as the necessity of constraint and suffering as both obstacle and catalyst to undertaking the impossible tasks variously figured as rhetoric, health, possibility, ethics, and flight. More specifically, Canguilhem's analysis of normativity leads us to a definition of health as the capacity to develop new capacities—the ability of “tolerating infractions of the habitual norm and instituting new norms in new situations” (197). In chapter 3, “Equipment for Living” this definition is echoed in Kenneth Burke's argument that health consists in the capacity to discover new perspectives of action. Burke's concept of perspective by incongruity suggests that it is only in producing incongruous, useless, and maladaptive effects that we produce a way out of the orientations and interpretive schemes that configure our experiences. Finally, in chapter 4, “Becoming ‘what one is,’” we arrive at the Nietzschean definition of health in which it is no longer recognized as a property of the individual but as the principle of a “fighting instinct” for affirming the forces which heighten our capacities for action. In the context of these definitions of

health, we might reread the dilemma of the disabled individual as something more than necessity of overcoming suffering, incapacity, or limits. Rather, the primary site of resistance is the configuration and conditions of the self-knowledge and processes of self-development by which the individual seeks to become healthy and to become otherwise.

The problem with technologies of normalization is not solely the exclusionary, prohibitive functions of social neglect, stigmatization, and institutional paternalism. Insofar as social and institutional mechanisms are productive and necessary tools for the production of new capacities for health, they are indispensable forces for seeking amelioration of disablement. However, the intensification of power relations into the formation of abject subjectivities and the increasingly invasive and privatized mechanisms of rehabilitation attack not so much the individual's health, but the individual's sense of self-determination in relation to their health. Contemporary forms of power and technologies of normalization while aiding the disabled individual's pursuit of health as a property (i.e., developing capacities and/or alleviating symptoms of suffering/limits) attack health as the principle of the individual's involvement in their own processes of self-development.

Our engagement with disability studies raises several issues that will be explored in more detail in chapter 4, “Becoming ‘what one is.’” As we have seen, under contemporary forms of power the site of contestation has increasingly become the development of the subjectivity in the dual senses the configuration of possibilities of knowledge about the self and modes of self-development. In chapter 4, the question of the politics of the self and body as its surface of inscription are taken up in the context of Foucault’s genealogy of the ethics of the care of the self. In this analysis, it becomes clear that understanding the mechanisms and means by which we are made subjects of ethical action are and have been the primary nexus of the individual’s confrontations with power. Ultimately, the fourth chapter argues that in context of genealogy, ethics becomes the practice of freedom when it eschews dependence on higher powers. In order to practice a Nietzschean discipline of health, the individual must give up the false security of submitting to the rule of law or habitual forms of desire in order to activate the singular will to power through which one affirms the opportunities for growth and becoming otherwise that constitute a continually renewing health.

As a preliminary to this transition between the case study of the disabled individual’s confrontation with power and the genealogy of technologies of the self, the next chapter first explores the role of the literature



as equipment for living. As Snyder and Mitchell argue, in seeking new modes of self-development as a means of contesting the orientations and institutional meaning provided for the disabled body, we must seek it “not as an established fact, but rather as a mutable, temporal, ‘first-person’ organism. Such is the domain of literature and art” (381-2). Chapter 3, “Equipment for Living,” explores Kenneth Burke’s notions of literature as a means of producing new possibilities for living and seeking a way out of the provisional limitations of the socializing forces of language. Burke’s theories offer a foundation for understanding the artist as something more than a symptom of culture. Ultimately, the next chapter will argue that the artist who suffers through the delirium of sickness and the alienation of singular visions that elude gregarious definitions provides a valuable service to the larger socius. Such an artist provides fabulations in order to both diagnose the illnesses of society and evoke configurations of possibility for a future yet to come.



So I should propose an initial working distinction between “strategies” and “situations,” whereby we think of poetry (I here use the term to include any work of critical or imaginative cast) as the adopting of various strategies for the encompassing of situations (1).

– Kenneth Burke, “Literature as Equipment for Living”

Moreover, the writer as such is not a patient but rather a physician, the physician of himself and of the world. The world is the set of symptoms whose illness merges with man. Literature then appears as an enterprise of health ... (3).

– Gilles Deleuze, Essays: Critical and Clinical

Many scholars studying Kenneth’s Burke work have focused on resituating his work in the context of the problems that he wrote to solve. After all, this historical approach is entirely in keeping with Burke’s own theory of dramatism and understanding of the critical or imaginative process; such efforts should be recognized as responses to specific situations. As Clayton Lewis argues, Burke should be seen as responding to an overemphasis

or privileging of “scene” in the explanation of motivational factors. That is, against the scientific or technocratic tendencies of his era, Burke sought to reintroduce the individual, the personal, and the poetic as factors worthy of consideration (368). However, as Carol Blair has countered such readings tend to “settle Burke down” and have “transformed him into our kind of humanist, our source of precept ... Burke has much more to say than we have allowed him to say” (Qtd. in Hawhee 130). Perhaps, it could be said that we have been too pious in our readings of Burke; that is, too beholden to a particular orientation or view of “what goes with what” in dealing with his work.

Certainly, the present study will be an exercise in impiety as far as traditional readings of Burke have gone. Yet, following his early work Permanence and Change, such impiety is entirely in keeping with his championing of “perspective by incongruity.” In attempting to open up our understanding of Burke’s work and his value for today, I want to focus on this early work in conjunction with two other thinkers, William James and Gilles Deleuze. Pragmatists of a sort, all three, James sought to understand individual psychology philosophically and developed an anti-foundationalist approach to truth he described as a radical empiricism; Burke built on pragmatist influences and provided a novel turn in situating the problem of interpretations of reality as a matter of rhetoric—of an *agon* of appeals that can

only be adjudicated on the basis of ethical and pragmatic grounds; finally, Deleuze offers a version of radical empiricism that is surprisingly consonant with both thinkers and his writings in literature can be seen as a poststructuralist explication of Burke's perspective by incongruity.

The immediate reason that it makes sense to put Burke and Deleuze in conversation is that they both approach literature from a perspective immanent to life. Burke's sociological criticism of literature as "equipment for living" focuses on the poet as responding to a situation that is essentially social. Thus, the literary work is an attempt to encompass a particular problem. In this approach, Burke offers an approach that "would derive its relevance from the fact that it should apply to both works of art and to social situations outside of art" (Philosophy 303). Deleuze, for his part, also seeks to undermine the categories by which literature is normally analyzed and understood in order to emphasize the artist as one who explores possibilities of life.

Important work has yet to be attempted exploring these two thinkers as heirs to different branches of a similar intellectual line. Both are heavily influenced by Bergson and Nietzsche; however, the main emphasis for the current project and the main connection I will explore between them lies in the pragmatic aspects of their thought. As Armin Frank argues, "in keeping with

Burke's essentially pragmatist outlook, he postulates a continuity between artistic and non-artistic intellectual activities" (Frank 95). Deleuze, for his part, approaches literature through the categories of the clinical and the critical.

Against the clinicization of literature (treating it as an example to be diagnosed and analyzed psychoanalytically or otherwise), Deleuze focuses on the writer as a critic, or in Nietzschean fashion as a physician of culture. Thus, rather than a "symptom" of culture, the writer should be understood as someone who engages it in a critical and creative fashion. In attempting to influence the approach or attitude of interpretation of literature, Deleuze seeks to alter the conditions of its enunciation:

This practice corresponds to a fundamental axiom in Deleuze's philosophy, often described as 'radical empiricism' or even 'pragmatism'; that is, the condition of a statement on literature is at the same a condition of literary enunciation itself, and the criteria by which literature appears as an object of real experience are at the same time the conditions of each particular expression or enunciation (Lambert 140).

In Burkean terms, such an emphasis points out the way that interpretations not only guide our experience of the world or of an object (such as literature), but in turn configure our possibilities for action. As we shall see, this fundamental

aspect of Burke's thought is best understood through an investigation of its pragmatist context. This will be the aim of the first section of this chapter.

However, the primary goal of such an introduction is to clarify the way in which orientation as a condition of experience is implicated as an important ground of ethical contestation for Burke. In his analysis of social change (and by extension, the role of literature and the poet), Burke offers perspective by incongruity as a primary means of opening up possibility. It is a tool for challenging and reshaping the orientations through which we experience the world. As Ross Wolin argues, "Perspective by incongruity, in simple terms, pushes to the limit our ability to generate meaning and make sense of the world through rational, pragmatic means. Perspective by incongruity is a violation of piety for the sake of more firmly asserting the pious" (76).

As I will argue, the "pushing of limits" is the essential feature of Burke's perspective by incongruity. However, the further contribution of this chapter will be to argue that for Burke this expansion of boundaries becomes "the pious." In other words, through an engagement with pragmatism and the work of Deleuze it will be shown that Burke's perspective by incongruity and approach to literature as equipment for life ultimately places its highest ethical value and end in the pursuit of new possibilities for life.

Perspective by incongruity is not, as a casual read might have it, a tool for refining the way in which we currently experience the world or for critiquing our modes of knowing in order to more accurately comprehend reality. Rather it is the pursuit of an interval, a slender space discovered once we understand language as force. In his most direct engagement with the force of language, The Rhetoric of Religion, Burke describes this space in the following fashion: “But once the successiveness of time (and its similarly indivisible partner, space) introduces the possibility of an interval between the command and the obedience, by the same token there is the possibility of disobedience” (278). As Barbara Biesecker argues, it is perhaps this aspect of Burke’s thought that is most prescient to the problems confronting us today and perhaps the most useful for helping us encompass it as a situation often described as postmodernity:

What Burke intimates [in the previous quote] is that situated within the “interval” is the possibility for a future that is not simply a future-present, but a radically other future whose conditions of realization are given over to us as a promise but whose actualization rests solely upon us (102).

It is my contention that perspective by congruity can be read profitably as a tool for producing such futures; and, furthermore, that Burke’s approach to



literature is one that respects the poet as a figure fully invested in the same project. Ultimately, the value of thinking Burke and Deleuze together is that it highlights this shared commitment and attitude toward literature in their thought.

Of course, my goal is not so much to offer a simple synthesis or explanation of the correspondences of these thinkers. After all, such an approach would merely flatten out what is unique to each. Rather, I am seeking to trace a strain of radical empiricism or pragmatism that runs through each of them, in order to modify and fashion it, to creatively imagine it for our contemporary situation. This is itself a pragmatist approach. It seeks not to establish its truth in a foundation or lineage (history of ideas), or its systemic coherency (idealism), but to evaluate it on the basis of its use for today:

Deleuze's own image for a concept is not a brick, but a "tool box." He calls his kind of philosophy "pragmatics" because its goal is the invention of concepts that do not add up to a system of belief or an architecture of propositions that you either enter or you don't, but instead pack a potential in the way a crowbar in a willing hand envelops the energy of prying (Massumi xv).

By placing Burke at the center and working forwards and backwards through James and Deleuze, I will seek to contextualize his thought in a way that brings

fresh insight to the fore—that unleashes, in a new way, the energy for “prying” it provides. In the pragmatist tradition and following Deleuze’s exhortation, I am interested in discovering a set of approaches or interpretations that have value for encompassing the problems we face today—theory as a tool box to be judged by its pragmatic value.

### **Belief/Orientation**

Undoubtedly, part of William James’ lasting appeal is that he straddles or mediates the opposed philosophical temperaments that he characterizes as the “tough-minded” versus the “tender-minded.” James’ radical empiricism or version of pragmatism was an attempt to walk a slender line between the rational idealists and the scientific empiricists of his day. Against the tender minded rationalists, James held that as empiricists we “give up the doctrine of objective certitude,” though “we do not thereby give up the quest or hope of truth itself” (Pragmatism 17). For pragmatists including James, John Dewey, and Charles Peirce, truth is something that “*happens* to an idea” (92). As antifoundationalists, they set themselves against any philosophy that would maintain an ideal realm that can be discerned through rational thought and that then is seen to support or exist behind “reality.” Rather, truth is merely

“whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good, too, for definite, assignable reasons” (James, “The Will to Believe” 37). Such a view denies Platonic ideality—the possibility of universal or certain truth.

Truth is for pragmatists primarily a matter of ethical or pragmatic value. It is a tool for engaging the world and better managing experience. Yet, this practical emphasis also cuts against the scientific empiricism of the day by pointing out that “the trail of the human serpent is ... over everything” (Pragmatism 33). Burke clarifies this point in his explanation of Dewey, “a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing” (Permanence and Change 49). As Burke explains, when looking at criminality, for example, we may focus on individual responsibility and the psychological development of the criminal; however, this would blind us to the structural social factors that produce criminality in society. At the same time, focusing on the latter would blind us to the former and incline to us to read criminality as purely determined by social forces foreclosing the possibility of individual agency.

Ultimately, for Burke and James, there are neither pure ideas nor pure facts that exist outside of human, social, and historical modes of experience and thought. It would seem that as tool users, all we have are tools that achieve certain results. There is no pure, unmediated experience, ideal or material. James characterizes the general approach this way: “The pragmatic

method in such cases is to try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences. What difference would it practically make to any one if this notion rather than that notion were true?" (Pragmatism 26).

Rather than depending on an *a priori* foundation for truth, pragmatists look to the effects or value of an idea or theory. To return to the previous example, the two approaches to criminality—emphasizing individual responsibility or social determination, respectively—cannot be adjudicated on the basis of their “rightness” or correspondence with reality. It is a chimera to think such a judgment is possible. Rather, these ways of engaging the social experience of criminality must be decided on the basis of their pragmatic value and/or ethical appeal.

For James, truth is ultimately the body of tools, ideas, and theories that have proven useful, accreting through history, comprising our body of “common sense.” Beliefs and habits are levels of socialized knowledge that are adapted and modified over time through experience both in society and the individual. Habits are shortcuts for repetitive action, while beliefs characterize the basis for means selecting in undertaking action. A belief is a bet on the future developed with reference to an interpretation of the past. This idea is a link between the thought of James, Dewey, and Burke. As McGowan

characterizes Jamesian belief, it is something that changes, but not by individual volition:

Beliefs, then, appear as fundamental commitments that play a crucial role in laying out just what world it is that I find myself in. Maybe “commitments” is the wrong word, since I don’t choose them. “Orientation” might be better. My beliefs locate me; they are the coordinates of my positioning in a world (126).

Thus, our beliefs are often inherited through the processes of socialization and to a degree they pre-configure the lens through which we will see and the foundation on which we will act in the world. In this way, the experiences which form the basis for the continued development of truth are already mediated by our beliefs or rather experienced *through* our orientation (as a body of beliefs or general understanding of the world).

Furthermore, as James explains, new beliefs gain acceptance on two levels. First, the degree to which they provide novel and pragmatically useful ways of engaging experience; yet, primarily, by the degree to which they can be incorporated into the prior body of belief and system of common sense through which we experience the world. Thus, belief tends to self-perpetuating; new beliefs are often read as true (corresponding to reality) because they correspond to beliefs we already hold and accurately engage the

ways we already experience the world. For James and Burke, such a recognition presents a problem for discovering possibilities of thought and action that are not completely determined or configured by the frameworks and orientations of language, belief, and habit. As James put it,

between the coercions of the sensible order and those of the ideal order, our mind is thus wedged tightly. Our ideas must agree with realities, be such realities concrete or abstract, be they facts or be they principles, under penalty of endless inconsistency and frustration (Pragmatism 96).

As I will attempt to show, for James, Burke, and Deleuze, the primary motivation in all of their works can be seen as an attempt to create a space for possibility and for human agency in a field of experience that appears socially configured through and through.

However, it is important to keep in mind that for pragmatists recognizing the “trail of the human serpent” cuts against two kinds of absolute determination: on one hand, it undermines a idealist or rationalist account of *a priori* foundations, teleological ends, or transcendental design; on the other hand, it unsettles the mechanical causation logic of materialist accounts of reality. As Burke argues, “this point of view does not, by any means, vow us to personal or historical subjectivism”: “The situations are real; the strategies

for handling them have public content; and in so far as situations overlap from individual to individual, or from one historical period to another, the strategies possess universal relevance" (Philosophy 1). This pragmatist approach to truth, belief, and social action carves out a space of experience that is conditioned, yet contingent and never fully determined either ideally or materially. This is the slender space in which our minds are wedged tightly.

Before moving on to discuss the strategies for producing possibility, it will be helpful to illustrate the ways in which this pragmatist legacy or radical empiricism operates in Burke's work and more fully sketch out his theory of orientation. In keeping with the pragmatist emphasis on last things (uses and effects) over first things (*a priori* foundations), James and Dewey especially are often wont to describe belief and truth as a "bet" on the future.<sup>1</sup> As Dewey notes, we often think of experience as what is "given." However, in its "vital form," it is "experimental" and "characterized by projection, by reaching forward into the unknown; connexion with a future is its salient trait" (7).

For the pragmatists, a primary target of critique is the way in which ethical and pragmatic claims for the value of a particular approach to

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<sup>1</sup> For James, pragmatism is primarily a method of focusing on the value, use, and aim of "truth" rather than its foundation: "*The attitude of looking away from first things, principles, 'categories,' supposed necessities; and of looking towards last things, fruits, consequences, facts*" (Pragmatism 29).

experience are presented as descriptions of “how things are.” Thus, in the attempt to influence belief and therefore action (especially in scientific discourse), a common strategy is to offer such arguments as a value free description of what “is.” As I discussed before, this is also a primary feature of the tenacity of particular orientations or belief systems in general: the correspondence of a theory with what has been “given” or inherited is often taken as correspondence with reality. If we understand reality as something human beings produce, then this is a very different claim than that forwarded by foundational theories that claim access to some stable, universal, *a priori* reality.

Of course, emphasizing this aspect of pragmatist thought leads us directly to Burke. As many scholars have noted, a primary feature of Burke’s work is his attempt to understand interpretation as a matter of appeal—a thoroughly ethical, rhetorical affair. In his attempt to do so, Burke utilizes techniques and adapts arguments that bear a clear influence of pragmatism. In his conception of orientation, for example, Burke makes the classic pragmatist move of focusing on belief as a “bet” on the future:

It forms the basis of *expectancy*—for character telescopes the past, present, and future. A sign, which is here now, may have got a significance out of the past that make it a promise of the future.



Orientation is thus a bundle of judgments as to how things were, how they are, and how they might be (Permanence and Change 14).

For Burke, attempts to shift the way we understand how things “were” and “are” should be recognized as attempts to influence how they might be. In engaging such attempts to shift orientation, we must take care to understand the way they make their “appeal” and can only evaluate them on the basis of their pragmatic and ethical value for the future. As Ross Wolin argues, in Permanence and Change, Burke seeks to write a

book of ethics, if ethics refers to the general governance of action, covering all that affects the decision to take a course of action (chiefly attitudes, values, and procedures. Burke subsumes traditional concerns about good and bad, making orientation, interpretative methods, and means selection the very center of ethics (77).

However, following this pragmatist trajectory, we might rather say that Burke is making an argument about truth or “knowing,” itself; that is, he subsumes truth into the “very center of ethics.” Or, to put it more radically, Burke makes of truth an essentially ethical enterprise. Of course, these are rather broad claims. In order to more closely investigate these pragmatist influences and

the development of Burke's theory of orientation, I would like to examine an example of a pragmatist tactic taken up and revolutionized by Burke.

A common object of pragmatist critique is the fallacy of "substance" in rationalist or idealist philosophies. As James points out: "Truth *ante rem* means only verifiability, then; or else it is a case of the stock rationalist trick of treating the name of a concrete phenomenal reality as an independent prior entity, and placing it behind the reality as its explanation" (Pragmatism 99). Originating in Peirce's work, "How to Make our Ideas Clear," this critique points out the way in which the Platonic idea is an abstraction from experience that is made to stand in as the explanation of it. James offers the following illustration:

Climate is really only the name for a certain group of days, but it is treated as if it lay behind the day, and in general we place the name, as if it were a being, behind the facts it is the name of ...

The fact of the bare cohesion itself is all that the notion of substance signifies. Behind that fact is nothing (Pragmatism 43-4).

Of course, in such examples the fallacy of the idealist approach is readily apparent. In general, this is one of numerous ways that James seeks to undercut foundational approaches to understanding truth. Generally, it is of a piece with the argument that idealist approaches take an abstract description of

an experience as its cause. Burke, however, provides a novel twist on this pragmatic critique by applying to the question of human motivation.

In his discussion of motivation Burke points out that a description of a motivation is merely a short hand for the situation, itself. Thus, an individual may react to a particular situation comprised of “danger-signs,” “reassurance-signs,” and “social-signs”:

By his word “suspicion” he was referring to the situation itself—and he would invariably pronounce himself motivated by suspicion whenever a similar pattern of stimuli recurred.

Incidentally, since we characterize a situation with reference to our general scheme of meanings, it is clear how motives, as shorthand words for situations, are assigned with reference to our orientation in general (Permanence and Change 31).

In a manner similar to the pragmatists, Burke points out that we often abstract our typical “reaction” to a situation and place it as the cause behind the situation. However, such an abstraction has the matter backwards. Furthermore, this move to abstract motivation from the situation covers over the role of orientation or belief in the matter:

Stimuli do not possess an *absolute* meaning ... Any given situation derives its character from the entire framework of

interpretation by which we judge it. And differences in our ways of sizing up a objective situation are expressed subjectively as differences in our assignment of motive" (35).

The degree to which we correctly grasp the motivation of an individual is really the degree to which we diagnose his/her situation through the framework of a shared orientation. Thus, for Burke, as for James, the way we experience reality and the way in which we act is largely determined by the orientation or interpretive scheme that we "believe" in.

Expressed this way, the room for "possibility" becomes rather narrow. However, insofar as in any given age and society there exist competing orientations, socialization is not a completely determining force; and, even in a particular orientation, a particular interpretation of a situation, there can be further room for maneuvering. We might consider Burke's discussion of complementary proverbs that agree on the situation but diverge in their attitude (i.e., glass half-full, glass half-empty). However, it might nonetheless be pointed out that the key point here is the way in which the interpretation governs human action through the presentation of a limited choice for action.

Ultimately for Burke, it is in the competition of schemes of interpretation that true possibility exists; and, it is in this arena of competition that rhetoric and social struggle make their entrance into our exploration of

pragmatists: “Any explanation is an attempt at socialization, and socialization is a strategy; hence, in science as in introspection, the assigning of motives is a matter of *appeal*” (24-5). If belief configures experience and is produced through socialization, then the rhetorical analysis of explanations is an important matter indeed.

From pragmatism, Burke takes an anti-foundational approach to human action and experience. However, Burke’s innovation is to recognize that if belief or orientation is a matter of socialization, then we must consider language as a force that has an impact on the way we experience and act in the world.<sup>2</sup> As Paul Jay writes:

Burke’s intervention in the contest of interpretive theories is essentially pragmatic and ethical: he rejects any notion that such theories can be grounded in a transcendental way, insisting instead that the legitimacy or validity of such a system must be grounded in the nature of its ethical and pragmatic claims (541).

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<sup>2</sup> “But the question of motive brings us to the subject of communication, since motives are distinctly linguistic products. We discern situational patterns by means of the particular vocabulary of the cultural group into which we are born. Our minds, as linguistic products, are composed of concepts (verbally molded) which select certain relationships as meaningful. Other groups may select other relationships as meaningful. These relationships are not *realities*, they are *interpretations* of reality—hence different frameworks of interpretation will lead to different conclusions as to what reality is” (Permanence and Change 35).

In Burke's thought, situations and motives are thoroughly constructed and largely configured by the interpretive schema, systems of belief, or orientations that ground our experience. Thus, the true arena of human possibility is in the contestation and judgment of orientations and the question of interpretation as rhetorical appeal.

As Wolin interprets this stage of Burke's thought, it marks a shift from an earlier concern for "how an individual constructs symbols to deal with social and political structures":

in *Permanence*, he is more interested in how our culture constructs social and political institutions (which operate to a great extent through symbols) to deal with what are principally symbolic structures. As Burke said, in *Permanence* he "now stressed independent, social, or collective aspects of meaning, in contrast with the individualistic emphasis of his earlier Aestheticist period" (85).

I would argue this shift entails a corresponding emphasis on a Jamesian understanding of belief as inherited orientation. For Burke, human beings are not simply critics of experience; all living things are critics in this sense.<sup>3</sup> As

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<sup>3</sup> For example, consider Burke's opening discussion of the fish who encounters "jaw-ripping food." In characterizing a change in behavior towards similar "food," Burke describes criticism as a process of revising behavior: "I mean simply that in his altered

we encounter the world, we do not deal with unmediated stimuli to which we respond and adapt. As Burke notes, “stimuli do not have absolute meaning.” Rather, our experience in the world, our role of critics, is often as critics of criticism. In Permanence and Change, Burke pushes a Jamesian conception of belief to its logic conclusion by emphasizing interpretation—the attempt to shift our orientation—as the primary focus in the pursuit of possibility. This entails a focus on the social and collective aspects of meaning as a battleground for ethical (truth) claims. The following section will be to explore such attempts to shift perspective in light of these pragmatist insights.

### **Perspective by Incongruity**

According to Burke, both Marx and Freud have produced “terminologies of motive,” ways of talking about a reality which the talking itself creates. His point about them is a double one: while neither is more than an interpretation or a perspective, this

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response, for a greater or lesser period following the hook-episode, he manifests the changed behavior that goes with a new meaning, he has a more educated way of reading signs. It does not matter how conscious or unconscious one chooses to imagine this critical step—we need only note here the outward manifestation of a revised judgment” (Permanence and Change 5).

does not mean they are simply at play, since they are purposeful and instrumental, aimed at change (or cure) (Jay 541).

Two important interpretive schemes that sought to shift perspectives on social phenomena in Burke's day were Marxism and psychoanalysis. As Paul Jay points out, Burke was interested in learning from the powerful influence these discourses were able to effect in society, but at the same time he sought to recognize their role as perspectives amongst possible others. Debra Hawhee situates this emphasis as owing to the influence of Nietzsche:

Nietzschean perspectivalism, as Burke saw it, described not only the multiplicity of interpretive frameworks available to and deployed by humans, but also—and more importantly—the transformative power of the slightest shifts in what Burke would call orientation (133-4).

For Burke, discourses such as Marxism and psychoanalysis attempt to reinterpret our experience on the basis of an appeal that they can improve our orientation to experience; that is, they offer new outlooks meant to give a better grip on life and a sounder basis for action and to resolve the dilemmas that outmoded orientations have left us in.



As Burke argues, trained incapacity or occupational psychosis (concepts he adapted from Veblen and Dewey respectively) is descriptive of orientations that have proved maladaptive in changing circumstances. Marxism and psychoanalysis each provide strategies meant to address the symptoms of such outmoded orientations and resolve the problem by a new interpretive scheme of the situation. Of course, a new interpretation and understanding is also a new terminology of motive. That is, insofar as motives are shorthand for situations, redefining the situation implies a different motivation and consequently a different program of action.

While such broad social discourses may have the great reach and power of socialization, the phenomena of resolving a problematic situation by a new schema of interpretation is everywhere on the human map. To illustrate this point, Burke offers the relatively mundane example of proverbs: "The point of view might be phrased this way: Proverbs are *strategies* for dealing with *situations*. In so far as situations are typical and recurrent in a given social structure, people develop names for them and strategies for handling them" (Philosophy 296-7). Thus, in keeping with his emphasis on the rhetorical nature of such interpretive schemes, in his later essay, Burke recharacterizes them as "strategies" for encompassing situations. Poetry and literature, then,

share in a similar effort to discover new ways of understanding experience and situations that implies new programs of action.

Keeping in mind the pragmatist foundation Burke is working from, the shift in perspective or interpretive schema can have profound effects: “altering what one can perceive and, thus, act upon, is transforming reality itself ...

Literature is equipment for living because it is direct, effective action upon the terms and the relations in which they stand to one another” (McGowan 142).

The point is thoroughly pragmatist. However, again it is necessary to emphasize Burke’s key innovation respective to pragmatism: namely, if truth is always instrumental—an interested, useful enterprise—attempts to provide new interpretations are never disinterested or simply attempting to better describe reality. “A better description for what purpose and to what end?” Burke might ask.

As Jay points out, Burke appreciated that “... Marxism contributes to the critique of ideology and helps demystify political rhetoric, while it is *itself* both a rhetoric and an ideology” (544). To cite Burke himself on this point:

Class-consciousness is a social therapeutic because it is *reclassification-consciousness*. It is a new perspective that realigns something so profoundly ethical as our categories of allegiance ...  
The new classification thus has implicit in it a new set of ideas as

to what *action* is, and in these ideas are implicit a new criteria for deciding what means-selection would be adequate (Permanence and Change 113).

In summary, interpretive schemes or perspectives are properly strategies for encompassing specific situations. Often new schemes arise to resolve some problem encountered as the incapacity of a prior orientation; thus, they are therapeutic in aim. These new schemes are necessarily interested in seeking to frame a new motivation as a program for action. Thus, Marxism and psychoanalysis provide interpretations that critique the old orientation, but are rhetorical insofar as they seek to supplant it and imply a new relation to experience. Yet, from a pragmatist perspective there is no recourse to correspondence with objective reality to judge these new interpretive schemes. Rather, they must be considered on ethical and pragmatic grounds. Whether Marxist, psychoanalyst, or literary figure, “the poet is, indeed, a ‘medicine man..’” Regardless of the medium, “the situations for which he offers his stylistic medicine may be very real ones” (Philosophy 65).

For a more extended treatment of perspective by incongruity as therapeutic, Burke turns to psychoanalysis. As Burke characterizes it, the essential strategy of psychoanalysis is that “it effects its cures by providing a new perspective that dissolves the system of pieties lying at the roots of the

patient's sorrows or bewilderments. It is an *impious* rationalization, offering a fresh terminology of motives to replace the patient's painful terminology of motives" (Permanence and Change 125). Through a renaming of the situation, the psychoanalyst seeks to dissolve the "psychosis" that arose from the old orientation. Thus, "it changes the entire nature of his problem, rephrasing it in a form for which there is a solution" (125). The radical aspect of Burke's description is that the diagnosis is itself the solution.

To be specific, the patient suffers from a problem wrapped up in his orientation or interpretive scheme of his situation. Psychoanalysis in the act of diagnosis supplants this interpretation with a new one which, when successful in its appeal, dissolves the problem along with the situation. Hence, Burke's curious suggestion that such therapy operates by "misnaming" the problem: "The notion of perspective by incongruity would suggest that one casts out devils by misnaming them ... One casts out demons by a vocabulary of *conversion*, by an incongruous naming, by calling them *the very thing in all the world they are not*" (133). Such a reading would sit at odds with a reading of Burke that would describe the symbolic action of poetry and literature as a thinking through of alternatives or as a preparation or example for "real" action. Rather, the strategy for encompassing a situation often presents itself as a diagnosis of the problem—a diagnosis that dissolves old categories and

offers new ones that provide a means of escape from the distressing situation. Read this way Burke anticipates a rather Deleuzian formulation of the poet or writer as a physician who diagnoses illness as an enterprise of health.

However, lest shifts in perspective appear as too easily achieved and possibility readily attained, Burke also cautions that orientations can be rather persistent and self-sustaining though vulnerable after a particular fashion:

An orientation is largely a self-perpetuating system, in which each part tends to corroborate the other parts ... However, for all the self-perpetuating qualities of an orientation, it contains the germs of its dissolution ... The ultimate result is the need of a reorientation, a direct attempt to *force* the critical structure by shifts of perspective (169).

It here that Burke's Nietzschean debt comes to the fore. Insofar as Deleuze is similarly indebted, this is a key hinge shared in their thought. Following Nietzsche, both consider language as invested by force. Insofar as interpretive schemes structure experience, the rhetorical contestation of perspective is a form of critique that takes its aim at the seed of dissolution in an unhealthy orientation: "It would seem to me that a system so self-sustaining could be attacked only *from without*" (61). This space of the "outside" occupies an important place in work of many post Nietzschean thinkers including Foucault

and Deleuze.<sup>4</sup> For the latter, the outside of an orientation, of language, or a system is found as its limit.

Burke, for example, argues that orientations find the seed of their own destruction in inexorably carrying out their logic to absurdist extremes.<sup>5</sup> The limit of an interpretive scheme is that sooner or later it produces effects that escape its own self-logic; that is, it inevitably encounter its “outside.”

Deleuze’s favorite example is the way that in modern writers, “language seems to be seized by a delirium, which forces it out of its usual furrows.” In seeking a new perspective, the writer pursues a “foreign language ... hollowed out in one language [which cannot occur] without language as a whole in turn being toppled or pushed to limit, to an outside or reverse side that consists of Vision and Auditions that no longer belong to any language” (Essays 5). These visions or auditions are effects that escape their own formalization; that is, they are effects that cannot be reconciled or captured by the system that they escape. For Deleuze, modern literature in most radical manifestations strains the limits of meaning; it makes language “stutter” and strains our ability to

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<sup>4</sup> For more on this point, consider Massumi (xiii) and Lambert (139).

<sup>5</sup> “I call both of these “heresies” because I do not take a heresy to be a flat opposition to an orthodoxy ... I take heresy rather to be the isolation of one strand in an orthodoxy, and its following-through with-rational-efficiency to the point here ‘logical conclusion’ cannot be distinguished from ‘*reductio ad absurdum*’” (Philosophy 113).

“understand” it. In doing so, it eludes the orientations that would seek to contain it through interpretation. In this way, literature creates possibility by offering a possibility that is not yet “formalized” or actualized in meaning; this is the essence of its possibility and creativity.

For his part, Burke cites approvingly the decomposition of language by literary figures such as James Joyce. These stylistic attacks on an orientation from its limit are precisely examples of the most radical kind of perspective by incongruity that Burke describes:

Were we to summarize the totality of its effects, advocating as an *exhortation* what has already spontaneously occurred, we might say that planned incongruity should be deliberately cultivated for the purpose of experimentally wrenching apart all those molecular combinations of adjective and noun, substantive and verb, which still remain with us (Permanence and Change 119).

Amidst these grotesque gargoyles of language, the proliferating incongruities of the modern age, Burke asks: “Out of all this overlapping conflicting and supplementing of interpretive frames, what arises as a *totality*? The only thing that all this seems to make for is a reinforcement of the *interpretive attitude* itself” (118). Though Burke begins with a rather mild invocation of perspective by incongruity as a tool for overcoming trained incapacity, he

ultimately reaches a Nietzschean apotheosis in which perspectivalism as tool for creating possibility becomes nearly a good in and of itself.

As Debra Hawhee argues in her discussion of Burke, the perspectivalism of Nietzsche that Burke takes up is not only a way of considering the claims of any individual interpretation but a means of reflecting on the “consequences or effects produced by perspectivalism,” itself (134). As she goes on to cite Deleuze, perspectivalism reinforces this interpretive attitude as a means of creating new possibilities for life, as an enterprise of health:

As Gilles Deleuze puts it, “Nietzsche demands an aesthetics of creation” ... Insofar as all language forces an encounter with the world, art transforms even as it produces knowledge. Deleuze writes, “In Nietzsche, ‘we the artists’ = ‘we the seekers after knowledge or truth’ = ‘we the inventors of new possibilities of life’” (138).

It is in this sense that perspectivism becomes something more than a tool for refining the ways in which we currently experience the world. Rather, it becomes a method for discovering a way out of the orientations which configure experience. In the Jamesian idiom, perspective by incongruity acquires its “cash value” by virtue of offering a greater space for human



possibility. Insofar as it proliferates the possibilities of experience, of knowing, of acting, and of being in the world Burke deems it a welcome relief from metaphysical claims that so often tend to rationalist or materialist determinism: “Rather than a ‘three-dimensional ... organic experience,’ Burke favors an ‘x-dimensional ... theoretical experience,’ hence allowing for differences, contingent valuations, multiple possibilities. Thus, he writes, ‘the more we can avoid the metaphysical the better’” (Hawhee 132).

### **Counter/Gridlock**

Remember, the big traffic jam in New York when the subways stopped? That’s when I learned the word gridlock. Gridlock means you can’t go any way. The traffic is so jammed, it can’t go forward, backwards, or sideways. What I had was counter-gridlock. I went every which way (Burke, Qtd. in Hawhee 139).

For Burke, as James before him, the difficulty of clearing a space for human action in a world that seems increasingly confusing and constraining was a primary concern. In James, this challenge took the figure of being wedged tightly between the accumulated “truths” of history and the beliefs

that configure our experience of reality. For Burke, the difficulty thereby becomes the task of a “criticism of criticism,” a need to unwind the tangled field of our interpretation (Permanence and Change 6). While on one hand there is a need to overcome the priests of culture who “devote their efforts to maintaining the vestigial structure” (179), in works like “Counter-Gridlock” Burke seems more concerned by the rapid pace and proliferation of orientations and the processes of socialization. In the quickening pace of modernity, Burke felt acutely the danger that the incapacities of our training may outpace our ability to diagnose them.

Hence, the importance of poetry and literature, for “poetry, broadly defined, is a locus of perspective by incongruity, a place where incongruous metaphors can be pushed together to create new ways of viewing the world—a counter-gridlock ...” (Hawhee 139). In fact, Burke names this task as the explicit aim of literature and poetry: “So I should propose an initial working distinction between “strategies” and “situations,” whereby we think of poetry (I here use the term to include any work of critical or imaginative cast) as the adopting of various strategies for the encompassing of situations” (Philosophy 1). If we experience reality through the categories of our orientation, then any attempt to resolve the “problems” produced by situation/orientations are necessarily attempts to think and explicate its “outside.” That is, the

orientation itself is the problem to be encompassed. As Greg Lambert points out, this is precisely the value literature offers for Deleuze:

In a diagnostic and critical vein, “certain literary works can be understood to produce a kind of ‘symptomatology’ that may prove to be more effective than political or ideological critique in discerning the signs that correspond to the new arrangements of ‘language, labour, and life’ to employ Foucault’s abbreviated formula for the grand institutions of instinct and habit (135).

Thus in the war of medicine men, of priests and prophets who strive, respectively, to constrain or open up possibilities of life, literature is a powerful ally for the latter. In judging whether the rhetorical appeals or interpretations they offer are medicine or poison, our criteria shall be whether they constrain, narrow, or otherwise limit life, or whether they provide new possibilities, experiences, and configurations of knowledge for living; or, to put it after a Nietzschean fashion, the question is whether they imply modes of action and existence that are sickly (gridlock) or healthy (counter-gridlock).

Echoing the pluralism of James, Burke describes a universe that is essentially plastic to human “knowing” — a universe open to a multiplicity of interpretations and implicated becomings:

When a philosopher invents a new approach to reality, he finds that his predecessors saw something as a unit which he can subdivide, or that they accepted distinctions which his system can name as unities. The universe would appear to be something like cheese; it can be sliced in an infinite number of ways—and when one has chosen his own pattern of slicing, he finds that other men's cuts fall at the wrong places (Permanence and Change 103).

In Deleuze's idiom the attempt of literature to encompass a problem or situation and define a strategy takes the form of a diagnosis: "The doctor certainly does not "invent" the disease, but rather is said to "isolate" it: he or she distinguishes cases that had hitherto been confused by dissociating symptoms that were previously grouped together, and by juxtaposing symptoms that were previously dissociated" (Smith xvi). It is in this particular sense that writers are Nietzschean physicians of culture; and, it is by the means of diagnosis that writers seek to develop programs of action for responding to situations as problems.

However, such an insight is one that Burke himself makes, though in his own idiom: "the poem is a sudden *fusion*, a *falling together of many things formerly apart*—and the very force of this fusion leads one to seek further

experiences of the same quality” (Permanence and Change 158). As Hawhee explains,

considered figuratively, this statement can apply to almost any act: the carving of the veins, for example *becomes* through the act of materially fusing razor and flesh. Poetry, then, produces effects, effects that, at times, may in turn produce unexpected results, thus creating more and sometimes endless opportunities for becoming (138).

Where Burke does discuss this interpretive appeal, the strategy of encompassing a situation in therapeutic terms is in his discussion of psychoanalysis. As I pointed out, in the secular conversion that psychoanalysis attempts, the diagnosis is itself a solution for the problem insofar as it reconfigures the situation in a way that dissolves the prior orientation and motivation.

It is precisely this figure of secular conversion, this type of rhetorical appeal, that Deleuze sees as the most powerful capacity of literature: “There is no literature without fabulation, but as Bergson was able to see, fabulation—the fabulating function—does not consist in imagining or projecting the ego. Rather, it attains these visions, it raises itself to these becomings and powers” (Essays 3). In its most elementary sense, fabulation as a fable is akin to Burke’s

discussion of the proverb. It is an attempt to encompass a particular situation and formulate an attitude (a program of action) towards it.

Fabulation posits an attitude or interpretation of situation that is a rhetorical appeal for action which seeks to unleash a revolutionary force. However, what distinguishes it from the proverb is its reliance on a retelling of history that is properly a prophecy—both a vision of the future and a lesson for its achievement. Thus, fabulation derives transformative possibility, in its latent or virtual state, from the situation itself. As a reinterpretation of reality, it is an appeal that seeks to transform society. As Burke would put it, insofar as it is an explanation that would shift or transform our orientation, and consequently how we experience the world, it is an “attempt at socialization”; that is, it is an attempt at “conversion.”

Consequently, fabulation, insofar as it is a means of socialization, seeks to create a people. It should be seen as active, transformative ethical vision rather than as positing an ideal world to be attained. As Lambert explains, fabulation is a type of appeal that turns the incongruities of an individual writer into a socializing force in language:

What is the power unleashed in revolution but the ideal game deployed within what is essentially a fiction; that is, the power to select and re-order the objects, artifacts and meaning that belong

to a previous world? Utopia, then, rather than designating a static representation of the ideal place, or *topos*, is rather the power of the 'ideal' itself, which can bifurcate time and create possible worlds (148).

In this sense, fabulation echoes the Jamesian "will to believe." This ethical vision is not derived from any first principle and cannot properly be a system of rules, dogmatism, or moralisms. Rather, it is a revolutionary force for life. To return to Burke, we might note the way in which he characterizes the incantatory mode of literature in which an artist like Joyce sets the task of "externalizing the internal" (Philosophy 112). In this incantatory mode, literature "functions as a device for inviting us to "make ourselves over in the image of the imagery" (116). This is the socializing aspect of the writer's vision; literature is always an appeal to shift our interpretation of the world.

Deleuze argues that the modern writer seeks to raise a personal vision to the level of a language, a language meant for a "people who are missing": "The ultimate aim of literature is to set free, in the delirium, this creation of a health of this invention of a people, that is, a possibility of life. To write for this people who are missing ... ("for" means less "in the place of" than "for the benefit of")" (Essays 4). Thus, the writer seeks not his own diagnosis and healing, his own strategy for encompassing a situation, but to launch a

rhetorical appeal for a new orientation that carries with it a program of action, a way of being:

For Deleuze, every literary work implies a way of living, a form of life, and must be evaluated not only critically but also clinically. “Style, in a great writer, is always a style of life too, not anything at all personal, but inventing a possibility of life, a way of existing” (Smith xv).

It is in this sense that Deleuze can declare that “Literature is a passage of life that traverses outside the lived and liveable” (Essays 1). Out of an engagement with problems of the “lived” the writer seeks a diagnosis that is properly a perspective by incongruity. It is a reformulation of orientation through a new interpretation. It is rhetorical, pragmatic, ethical and an enterprise of health.

This is finally the pragmatist thread that unites James, Burke, and Deleuze:

The agonistic space of literature allows the conflict of various attitudes without any avowal that there is a correct, final, or totalizing attitude ... Literature dramatizes possibility—recalling the Jamesian insight that only the existence of options and the capacity, but not the necessity, to exercise some but not all of those options render action thinkable and desirable (McGowan 133).



The point is not that literature can simply “dissolve” our problems. However, literature’s dramatic role is not separate from life itself. Its dramatism is the quality and power of its appeal. Rather it can diagnose particular configurations of “grid-lock” and map the lines of flight and effect a “counter-gridlock” through its diagnosis and marshalling of the strategies of perspective by incongruity. For Burke, literature is equipment for life; for Deleuze it is an enterprise of health; for all of us, it a means of creating possibilities that make “action thinkable and desirable.”

The ethical and pragmatic value of literature for life is that embraces and pursues an attitude towards truth and ethics valorizes possibility as such. As Wolin avers, “Burke’s genius as an ethical theorist lies in his refusal to supplant traditional ethics with another system equally fixed. He offers instead a basic position *toward* ethics, a flexible *attitude* or *approach*” (77). As Hawhee argued of perspectivalism, the value in such an ethics is not only in its recognition of all ethical systems as contingent and pragmatic, but that it provides a grounds for reflecting on the “consequences or effects produced by” a “flexible *attitude* or *approach*,” itself.

Burke’s genius as an ethicist is not only to frame an attitude as a opposed to a code, but that this attitude is itself a specific strategy for pursuing the “good life.” Ultimately, I have attempted to show that both Burke and

Deleuze in their pragmatic approaches to literature and life follow a

Nietzschean insistence that the “good life” is the pursuit of

an overflowing and ascending form of existence, a mode of life  
that is able to transform itself depending on the forces it  
encounters, always increasing the power to live, always opening  
up new possibilities of life (Smith xv).

However, it is hopefully equally apparent that this approach is equally of a piece with the pragmatism of James and his “will to believe” in human possibility. Through an engagement with pragmatism and Burkean orientation, I have endeavored to show that such human possibility is a fraught and difficult enterprise.

Our heightened contemporary sense of this difficulty is one of the reasons that Burke is important as a resource. As Biesecker argues, one of most relevant aspects of Burke’s thought for today lies in his attempt to theorize human possibility while taking seriously the coercive force language as it operates through socialization:

[Burke offers a] retheorization of the relation between subject and structure and, hence, of social change that discerns in the symbolic or discursive practices of the present the opening for a

future that is something other than a repetition or projection of the self-same (88).

In the pursuit of tools for grasping and capitalizing on this opening for the future, Burke's perspective by incongruity and his formulation of literature as equipment for life are of extreme value: they are possible means of "prying" open the traffic jam of postmodernity and countering our contemporary "grid-lock."

### **Possibility/Ethics**

How long have I already sought to prove to myself the perfect innocence of becoming! How many singular paths has this already taken me down! At first it seemed to me that the just solution was simply to decree: 'Existence, as something similar to art, does not fall under the jurisdiction of morality; furthermore, morality itself belongs to the domain of phenomena.' Next, I said to myself: 'Every concept of guilt is objectively devoid of value, but subjectively, every life is necessarily unjust and alogical.' Finally, the third time, I took on myself the negation of any aim, from the fact of experiencing the unknowability of any causal

chain. And why all this? Was it not in order to procure for myself the feeling of total irresponsibility? – to situate myself outside of all praise and blame, completely independent of yesterday and today, in order to pursue my own aim in my own manner? (Nietzsche, Qtd. in Klossowski 11).

Kenneth Burke's engagement with pragmatist theory led him to posit the difficulty of discovering possibility within the resources of language and of avoiding the dangers of conversion to equally problematic discursive schemes as the primary challenge of modernity. His championing of perspective by incongruity leads to the nearly unequivocal embrace of the value of perspectivism and the multiplication of possibility as the highest ethical value available for life. However, Burke also cited the challenges of the quickening pace of modernity in which the problem was no longer solely the gridlock of conventional and foundationalist frameworks, but rather the rapid proliferation of new perspectives and potentially newly constraining processes of socialization: "What I had was counter-gridlock. I went every which way" (Burke, Qtd. in Hawhee 139). Perhaps, the image of writer as artist of life suggests a certain naïve heroism in which new possibilities always equal the good. Maybe, in this sense, the current chapter echoes Nietzsche's call for a

“perfect innocence of becoming” and the task of achieving “total irresponsibility” (Nietzsche, Qtd. in Klossowski 11). Yet, these routes are certainly not without dangers of their own. In the battle of the priests of culture who maintain traditional organizations and the prophets or medicine men of literature who seek to open up new possibilities, there is a danger in presenting a too facile opposition.

In chapter 5, “Ecstatic Practice,” the question of the battle between priests and sorcerers is represented as the struggle between order and chaos, between gregarious intelligibility and the asignifying modes of coherence of singular experience. Carlos Castaneda’s The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge dramatizes his purported apprenticeship in which his teacher, Don Juan, subjects Carlos series of psychotropic experiences and disorienting regime of training. Through a total derangement of Carlos habitual senses and faculties of rational representation, Don Juan teaches him how to experience “total irresponsibility” and the “complete innocence of becoming” in the form of shamanic flight. As a medicine man of literature, Castaneda illustrates the capacities and dangers of the asignifying semiotics both the allure of the freedom they offer and the dangers of rational breakdown they engender. By the end of the novel, Carlos is placed in a position where he can no longer tell the difference between “reality” and

“illusion.” The outcome of the novel places the value of the teachings in ambiguous setting. It is not clear whether Carlos has been helped or hurt by his experiences. However, Castaneda, the author and anthropologist, discovers as a writer of fabulations a path outside the discursive boundaries of scientific authority and review. Instead, he becomes an infamous writer who has no choice but to pursue, like Nietzsche, his own aim in his own manner.

In taking up the dual dangers of submission to the higher powers of submission to the law or the excesses of unleashed forms of desire and possibility, chapter 4 encounters the problem of recognizing the difference between a Nietzschean discipline of health and the facile rejection of organization, law, and order in favor of an equally disastrous pursuit of the unleashing of desire. “Becoming ‘what one is’” requires something more than a mere rejection of the law, it requires engaging health and ethics as ongoing practices of freedom rather than theoretical perspectives that may be owned. Beginning with a genealogy of the technologies of self, the fourth chapter moves on to propose an important distinction between Marcusean project of libidinal freedom and a Nietzschean ethics of the affirmation of change. Ultimately, it argues that genealogy is necessary for ethics insofar as it is the means by which we can diagnose the fascisms of both or laws and desires in the confrontation with the impossible task of becoming otherwise.

## BECOMING 'WHAT ONE IS'



Figure 5: CHAPTER 4

It may be useful to summarize the dilemmas of becoming otherwise as they have been encountered thus far. In the second chapter, disability studies emerges as a collective protest against the perceived prohibitions and isolations produced by technologies of normalization; yet, in the end, the productive, molecular techniques of biopower led disabled individuals to fall back on themselves and discover the space of resistance in the relation they have to their own self-development. The ongoing struggles with the coercions of power are increasingly discovered in the everyday practices by which we produce the “self.” In the analysis of disability studies, the form of resistance modulates from collective confrontation and protest into a privatized, consumer oriented focus on “quality of life” issues. Ultimately, the health of the individual lies in the establishment of a positive role in the processes of their own self-development of new capacities for living. It expresses a new form of the challenge of becoming otherwise: what are the techniques, practices, or forms that might allow us to care for the self and seek new capacities without further intensifying relations of power?

The third chapter mirrors this narrative in reverse; it moves from the private experience of meaning and possibility for action to the writer as a physician of culture and force for social change. It dramatizes the dilemma of



individuals who must seek connection with forces from outside their orientations in order to arrive at new perspectives for action and multiply their possibilities for living. On one hand, becoming otherwise requires hospitality to the socializing forces of language and a willingness to entertain confusion and perspectives by incongruity—to change the individual must welcome the production of meaning effects that cannot be judged before being experienced. On the other hand, the artist as a physician of culture takes the isolated, idiosyncratic, and singular effects of these processes of multiplying possibility and opens them back onto the larger culture. Through the mode of fabulation, the artist becomes something more than a symptom of a sick culture—the artist fulfills a therapeutic role of establishing collective frames of action, providing an interpellative forces and forms for a “people yet to come.” The artist of life cultivates perspectives by incongruity and produces effects which escape formalization as the means of discover what is new. However, the aesthetic mode of literature for life expresses another version of the problem of becoming otherwise: how can we seek to produce new possibilities for living while remaining cognizant of the dangers of becoming; that is, does the multiplication of the perspectives for action merely escape habitual orders and rules of law for perspectives which may well be worse?

The present chapter responds to a series of problematics emerging from the imbrications of these issues of health and possibility; it elucidates a set of relations between practices of health and aesthetic dimensions of ethical subjectivity. The first section explores Foucault's genealogy of the practices of the self. It discovers in the early Greeks an example of ethical subjectivity in which the alimentary concerns of health became the basis for an aesthetics of existence. Focusing on the body and its effects, the early Greeks invented the technologies of the self that would become the basis and grasping point for the development of Western technologies of power. Foucault argues that it was through the universalization and totalization of practices of ethics into first moral and later scientific modes of self-knowledge that the technologies of power turned disciplines of health into mode of subjection. The second section turns to Nietzsche in order to consider the form of a discipline of health that eschews the reactive modes of the obligation to truth. By betraying the lie of the ideal and the hollow forms of representation, Nietzschean health seeks to "become what one is" through the affirmation of contingency, chance and their arbitrary resolution in the form of destiny. Nietzsche argues individuals must learn to act the greater force of their affinities irregardless of causal chains of logic or the enticements of false purposes or ends to action—one must be prepared to discover a "perfect innocence of becoming" and perform an ethics

of total irresponsibility. Finally, in the third section, the dangers of becoming are explored in the form of the rule of law and the form of the right to desire. Deleuze and Guattari argue that whether we seek to submit to a law or liberate our desires, we remain susceptible to fascisms embedded in the orientations which configure our possibilities for action (history, memory, desire). Nietzsche's call to total irresponsibility refuses responsibility as such: it admits of no higher power to which one can safely submit. Rather the task of becoming otherwise is posed as a continually renewed and paradoxical problem of genealogy: it requires the patient examination and diagnosis of the constellations of forces that make up the contexts of our ethical actions; while nonetheless and simultaneously, it requires affirming that we act without any foreknowledge or prescience of effects.

### **Care of the Self: the Recovery of the Body**

In approaching Michel Foucault's, The Care of the Self, I think it would be worthwhile to consider certain aspects of his larger itinerary as a thinker. That is, it may be helpful to consider the complicated resonance of the phrase "care of the self" in the context of Foucault's body of work. In a 1982 talk, Foucault summarized his work as a series of attempts to trace the history of

how humans have developed knowledge about themselves. Hence, his primary focus has been the subject. However, we nonetheless see a shift inaugurated in this essay:

Perhaps I've insisted too much on the technology of domination and power. I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others, and in the technologies of the individual domination, in the mode of action that an individual exercises upon himself by means of the technologies of the self ("Technologies of the Self" 146).

In his analysis of historical modes of power and domination, Foucault gradually came to understand power as operating not only through law and interdiction as a prohibition of individual freedom, but as a an incitement to the production of self knowledge. Thus, the self became not simply a pawn in a field of power, but the means of its exercise. Hence, Foucault's famous suggestion that in the mode of a truly contemporaneous critique we should seek not to know ourselves, but to become otherwise. Technologies of the self, the means by which our relation to ourselves are managed, become the site not only of an analysis of power, but a space of contestation and resistance.

In light of this description of Foucault's work, The Care of the Self occupies an interesting position. In his work on the history of sexuality,

especially his engagement with the ascetic practices and regimens of the priests and monks of Christianity, Foucault recognized that the positive or productive quality of contemporary biopower is not a shift from solely from the interdictions of law to the production of knowledge in the modern arena. Rather, it is a new inflection or a unique arrangement and use of technologies of the self that seem to extend further and further back into human history. Eventually, the genealogy of sexuality traces the question back to the Greek practices of “caring for the self.” Of course, on this side of the matter, this final volume of the series bears out Foucault’s focus on power and the history of sexuality as inhering in relations constituted between an individual—his/her self and others.

However, these analyses are important for a second reason. If we recognize that power operates through these technologies of self, then it becomes all the more important to understand how they function and the transformations they effect in order to be able to critique, contest, and change them. Thus, if a primary question is how to develop new subjectivities no longer tied to the historical forms congruent with the state, The Care of the Self becomes important groundwork not only for understanding the present but for assembling tools or a technology for producing a new future. Ultimately, this is the greatest exigency for the question of the “subject.”

Foucault's care is not to discover in the Greeks an early origin for Christian asceticism, but to delineate its unique difference. Therefore, while it is a form that "revolves around the question of the self, its dependence and independence, of its universal form and the connection it can and should establish with others, of the procedures by which it exerts its control over itself," it is nonetheless distinct from the forms of Christianity (The Care of the Self 238). The latter is a "different way of constituting oneself as the ethical subject of one's sexual behavior" (240).

Certainly, in the Greeks we find interesting precedents for what will become a modern relationship to sexuality. On one hand, we might note its role as a primary field of self knowledge and mastery. On the other, sexuality is linked to a concern with personal health and becomes a problematized in relation to ethics and the other. However, it diverges from the modern form in an interesting way (this is a point I will explore further in the next section), insofar as it takes the form of a responsiveness to the body. The Greeks do not reject sexuality as evil, but understand it as dangerous. What is required is vigilance in discovering the excesses of reasoning desire that would lead us away from the needs and the rhythms of the body—excesses that may lead to illness, invasion, or exhaustion of the individual and of the polis.

As contemporary theory and ethics has increasingly become concerned with the body as a politicized space, it is of no doubt exigent to consider these technologies of the self that deal so explicitly with the body. Or rather, we may better understand the questions of ethics and body through analysis of a tradition of self-mastery in which the body has yet to be effaced.

### On the Surface

The whole surface of consciousness—consciousness is a surface—must be kept clear of all great imperatives. Beware even of every great word, every great pose! So many dangers that the instinct comes too soon to “understand itself” (Nietzsche, “Ecce Homo” 254).

Foucault, in taking up this theme from Nietzsche, posits the body itself as a surface: “the surface of the inscription of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of the dissociation of the Me (to which it tries to impart the chimera of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration” (Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” 356-7). This body, “totally imprinted by history,” as a locus of forces and relations of power has

no transhistorical essence or nature that could provide a stable ground for norms, transcendental values, or ethics: “Nothing in man—not even his body—is sufficiently stable to serve as the basis for self-recognition or for understanding other men” (360). It appears that even as Nietzsche and Foucault return the question of ethics to the body; its imbrication in forces of power/knowledge render it an unstable foundation for an ethics based on truth.

In other words, as Nietzsche denies “all great imperatives” Foucault will deny similarly the pretension of making normative claims from the particular; that is, he is not interested in deriving an ethics from the body as “ground.” The ethic of the body, insofar as it is marked by history, is thus contingent and should not be made universal. After all, in terms of ethics, isn’t this the most hallowed of imperatives? It is the imperative to universalize: either to provide a universal for the particular to follow, or to derive the universal as a law or normative claim from particulars.

Foucault’s fascination with the Greeks and the care of self is in part due to the particular inflection of ethics as a concern for the self which attempts to bring into harmony the relation to one’s self with one’s relation to others. It is on one hand an alimentary responsiveness to the body, but primarily an exercise of self-mastery. In this sense, it is a disciplining of personal appetite



but not as a good in itself (Christian asceticism) demanded by a higher power (God, reason), but as a means to a local harmony achieved through a responsive moderation. The Greeks invented technologies of the self or the technique of subjectivation as the means of creating and constituting a relation to one's self. By turning force and relations of force against themselves, by harnessing the power to govern others and directing it toward the self, a fold of the outside is produced which constitutes the form of interiority. For Foucault, this space is the space where practices of freedom can emerge: "what is ethics, if not the practice of freedom, the conscious practice of freedom?" ("The Ethics" 28).

In his summary of the Greek project, Foucault provides some hint as to where and how this innovation became the tool of self-renunciation and *bad conscience* in Christian morality. Whereas initially, the Greek practices of self focused on a form of self-mastery in relation to alimentary concerns, they also supplied a universal form of the relation of the self and others: one seeks to rule the self in order to better rule others. Foucault argues that this universal form becomes an imperative as alimentary concerns gradually take on an increasingly moral and rigid codification (The Care of the Self 238). In this way, the universal opens the door to the care of the self not just as an ethics, but as a morality. It will eventually become the grasping point for forces of

power/knowledge which penetrate and make use of the channels and capacities produced through subjectivation; the form of interiority, the folding of power against itself, is the prerequisite development for the exercise of subjection by technologies of power.

However, we should be wary of telling this story with too much nostalgia. There is no pure Greek technology of self or mode of subjectivation to which we might return. As Deleuze notes, though there is no going back:

What must be stated, then, is that subjectivation, the relation to oneself, continues to create itself, but by transforming itself and changing its nature to the point where the Greek mode is a distant memory. Recuperated by power-relations and relations of knowledge, the relation to oneself is continually reborn, elsewhere and otherwise (Foucault 104).

Practices of freedom, as a mode of ethics, secure their space through the refusal of the great imperatives. This space of freedom is the relation to the self that which is always “reborn, elsewhere and otherwise.” However, in a positive and active fashion it must be comprised of solutions that are local: it must be responsive to the body, to others, and open to ‘becoming what one is.’ We will soon turn to Nietzsche to address the latter point, but first a question of technologies.

## Technologies of the Self

In a discussion of ethics and the self, Foucault situates the central problematic of Western man as an obligation to truth ("The Ethics" 37). As it relates to mode by which we are constituted as subjects this obligation to truth is constitutive of us as "moral subjects of our own actions" (Foucault, "What is Enlightenment" 56). Thus, where the Greek's sought an aesthetics of existence in their care of the self, contemporary human beings seek self-fulfillment on the basis of what science and the twin aspect of medico-juridical regimes can tell us about the self and its obligation to truth.

In other words, where once, under the sign of care of the self, knowledge of the self was a secondary means for achieving the primary end of a good and beautiful life, Western culture continues to renounce the self and thereby know it through a submission to the higher authority of science. The path is a somewhat convoluted one. Foucault's analysis of this development begins at the point at which spiritual and ethical concerns become tied together in the dialogues of Socrates: knowing oneself becomes the privileged mode of care of the self. Furthermore, this knowing is not of the body or the world, but of the true which is one's immortal soul ("Technologies of the Self" 150). Thus,

Platonism provides the grasping point for the theme of the obligation to truth which then takes the form of a universal or absolute knowledge. The groundwork for the shift to a properly Christian morality is completed by the Stoics who universalize ethics by making it a matter of what 'any reasonable being should do.'

Foucault continues his genealogy by describing the four primary aspects to ethical activity, that is, activity performed on and constitutive of our relations to ourselves. Under Christian morality, the ethical substance (1<sup>st</sup> aspect) shifts from the Greek *aphrodisia* (pleasure) to the flesh (desire) ("On the Genealogy" 111). Whereas as the Greek concern had always been with acts, Christian morality seeks to uncover the (im)purity of desire through a deciphering of the intent of the soul. Here, we might recognize what Nietzsche characterizes as a classic reactive move in which force is separated from what it can do. Second, the Greek obligation to create a beautiful existence has been replaced with an obligation to truth as the mode of subjectivation (2<sup>nd</sup> aspect). Furthermore, the means of work on the self or mode of asceticism is one in which the self is known through renunciation. What a body can do and its actions are deemed irrelevant questions, we are rather incited to discover the truth of our motivations by an examination of conscience (3<sup>rd</sup> aspect). Through these practices, Christian morality seeks a *telos* (4<sup>th</sup> aspect) of purity rather than

the Greek immortality of the self as art (112). To summarize broadly, where the Greeks focused on effects relative to the body and its capacities (pleasure, aesthetics, actions, and art), Christian morality interposes questions of intentions and truth (desire, truth, conscience, purity).

Echoing Nietzsche's analysis in The Genealogy of Morals, Foucault argues that the next stage in the development of the Western obligation to truth is the triumph the ascetic ideal over Christian morality. The ascetic ideal overcomes Christian morality by displacing the ethical in favor of the rational, that is, by founding the conditions of possibility for a secular science. In his "Mediations," Rene Descartes overthrows the tradition of ethical work on the self by making *askesis*, or self-discipline, no longer necessary for truth. Instead, one may be immoral and still know truth.

Through Descartes, the possibility of a modern science that makes us subjects of knowledge is discovered. Descartes revises the Stoic ethical formula, "what any reasonable being should do," as a formula for scientific reason, "what any reasonable being can know." Immanuel Kant completes this enlightenment era transformation by reuniting ethics with science/rationality and positing a universal ethical subject. Thus, we become subjects of the knowledge developed about us (through science) and obligated to discover the truth of our intentions in order to submit them to the rule of reason. It is in this

light that we might understand Kant as recovering a Neo-Platonic subject as the price of conjuring away the Christian soul (125).

As the critique of metaphysics moves forward and Kantian universality is challenged (as it challenged Christian theology before it), thinkers like Jean-Paul Sartre begin to posit the self as something no longer given to us (110). However, for Foucault, Sartre's emphasis on authenticity as an ethical substance and/or *telos* for ethical behavior is suspect. As with Kantian critique before it, it leaves the obligation to truth unchallenged and merely eliminates one mode of authority by which it ought to be judged. Sartrean authenticity is like the 'Californian cult of self' which derives its value from knowledge of the "what the self is" from science. The focus on authenticity becomes an imagined political/critical distance that further cedes control to regimes of truth. Foucault argues that contemporary forms of power are no longer concerned with an individual's actions or intentions, but rather with medico-juridical interventions into health and normativity of the populace, defined through and by scientific knowledge.

Ultimately, for thinkers like Foucault and Deleuze, the creation of new pleasures becomes one possible avenue of resistance—a way of becoming other than we are. If the Western tradition has been indifferent to pleasure, obliged us to renounce acts of pleasure in favor of deciphering our desire through first

religious and later scientific means, then perhaps an affirmation of pleasure as activity is something we can take away from the Greeks. Necessarily, such an ethics would be comprised of strategies gleaned from our culture and could not be inaugurated from some chimerical place outside of power. Rather, technologies of the self could regain their affirmativity by focusing on acts and pleasure, by no longer renouncing the self in favor of some higher power, but rather developing the self on the basis of an aesthetics of creativity.

Of course, this “way out” of the present age, the difference that today introduces with respect to yesterday has its own dangers. After all, we have moved past the Adornian critique of the individual as consumer. In late capitalism, we are all *producers* of ourselves: through our consumption choices and participation in culture, we are called upon to produce ourselves and clamor for attention in an already crowded market place. Here, I cannot help but think of the influence of reality TV and other modes of user generated content gradually infiltrating our consciousness. In these postmodern simulacra, truth and/or reality is that to which we are becoming indifferent, we are just characters who clamor for attention, give the audience what it wants, and hope for favorable editing. Perhaps, we have already shifted somewhat from an obligation to truth. Haven’t we already developed an aesthetics of creativity as the ethical mode of today? However, instead of an aesthetics of

existence, we may have substituted an aesthetics of marketability, identity, and self-fulfillment.

It seems clear that Foucault has proved prescient in asking this question of practices of freedom and of the care of the self for the present day. It is a problematic that ties together a host of incongruous details of our life: “what must be understood is what makes them simultaneously possible: it is the point in which their simultaneity is rooted; it is the soil that can nourish them all in their diversity and sometimes in spite of their contradictions” (Foucault, “Polemic, Politics” 24). For some, Foucault’s late work represents a retreat from questions of power, a sign that he “mellowed.” However, I would agree with Deleuze that if Foucault had to go back to the Greeks, it was in order to move sufficiently far back in the past to seize the question of the subject at its origins in discontinuity. That is, in his work with problematic of subjectivation Foucault returns to the Greek models of a technology of self that continue to influence and configure the questions of possibility for today.

### **Will to Power – A Discipline of Health**

What does it mean to “become what one is?” Certainly, it does not lie in securing, purifying or establishing an inviolable identity grounded in an



economy of the self and other, based on the negative movement of the dialectic. Rather, it is an affirmation of force and the will to power—the Yes to life. Nietzsche’s declaration that “no new idols are erected by me” that he is the enemy of “the *lie* of the ideal,” which has been a “curse on reality” is of a piece with his refusal of believers (“Ecce Homo” 217-8). In “Ecce Homo,” one part of Nietzsche’s first task is to refuse and thwart any attempt to monumentalize his thought and work as an ideal to be followed, even though he clearly longs to be heard.

The ascetic, the priest, the historian, and the philosopher are all figures that lay claim to interpreting the will of the ideal, thereby gaining authority through an essential fiction. Rather than becoming what one is, such an individual divides their own force against itself. In denying their own forces, turning them inwards, they participate and reap the “benefits” of *ressentiment*. In his classic essay, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, and History,” Foucault describes these figures this way:

The demagogue denies the body to secure the sovereignty of a timeless idea, and the historian effaces his proper individuality so that others may enter the stage and reclaim their own speech. He is divided against himself: forced to silence his preferences and over-come his distaste, to blur his own perspective and replace it

with the fiction of universal geometry, to mimic death in order to enter the kingdom of the dead, to adopt a faceless anonymity. In this world where he has conquered his individual will, he becomes a guide to inevitable law of the superior will (363).

Or to contextualize this refusal otherwise, we may consider it as of a piece with Nietzsche's critique of Kant. Following Deleuze's analysis in Nietzsche and Philosophy, the fatal flaw of Kant's critical project, the place where it fails, is in its inception where it "carefully avoids asking the preliminary question: "Who must undertake critique, who is fit to undertake it?" (88).

While Kant critiques the proper deployment or operation of various faculties, he never questions the value of his categories in the first place. In other words, while Kant undertakes a critique of "what can I know? What should I do? What can I hope for?," he never questions the value of "true knowledge, true morality, and true tradition" (Nietzsche 89-90). In doing so, Kant makes himself the servant of these "superior wills" to which he becomes a "guide." As Deleuze further explains: "For Kant, what legislates (in a domain) is always one of our faculties: understanding, reason. ... We are legislators only insofar as we submit to one of our faculties, as it were the whole of ourselves" (92). Thus, the idol and reactionary forces operate by dividing force against itself and submitting or subjecting oneself to *ressentiment*

in order to gain an imagined victory. The ascetic ideal and its “humble” laborers represent the triumph of these forces of sickness.

However, thus far, we have merely explored the project of “*Ecce Homo*” in its negative or more aptly critical function or context. What then, does Nietzsche offer in place of himself as idol? In contrast to the demagogue and the historian, Nietzsche practices the genealogical method. It is a method that utilizes history to challenge and critique the ideal in a positive manner. In this sense: “History is the concrete body of becoming; with its moments of intensity, its lapses, its extended periods of feverish agitation, its fainting spells, and only a metaphysician would seek its soul in the distant ideality of the origin” (Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” 354). Or as Nietzsche himself puts it:

All the problems of politics, of social organization, and of education have been falsified through and through because one mistook the most harmful mean for great men—because one learned to despise “little” things, which means the basic concerns of life itself (“*Ecce Homo*” 256).

Thus, in approaching his own life Nietzsche places the initial emphasis on the “little” things of his own life: “nutrition, place, climate, recreation, the whole casuistry of selfishness” (256). It is through these categories of everyday life

that Nietzsche characterizes his sense of “taste,” that is, his instinct of self preservation which amounts to the ways in which he “chooses” and affirms the vital forces of life.

However, Nietzsche also characterizes himself through a second notion of descent or *Herkunft*. Not a search for the individual, but as Foucault would have it: “it seeks the subtle, singular, and subindividual marks that might possibly intersect them to form a network that is difficult to unravel” (“Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” 355). In is this aspect of his self-genealogy that he presents his dual nature in the riddle of his Father/Mother nature. He presents himself as both decadent and a beginning (but also destiny). His experience of the full scope of health and sickness provides him with “the know-how, to *reverse perspectives*” and is “the first reason why a “revaluation of values” is perhaps possible for me alone” (“Ecce Homo” 223). If these forces, these “little” things are the concrete body of Nietzsche, then his works are the multiple expression of the will to power realized through them.

In other words, the first part of “Ecce Homo” works through a genealogy of the forces and legacies that are the descent of Nietzsche as a concrete body. They are complemented by his “taste” and the realization and development of his powers of self-preservation—of health and self-discipline. Together, they are analyzed as the conditions of Nietzsche’s emergence as a

thinker. The latter part of “*Ecce Homo*,” which deals with individual works, explores the expressions that this health, this affirmation of the will to power manifests itself through. Thus, the self-genealogy performed in this text is both a pedagogy on recognizing and embracing health, while at the same time an effort to thwart or ward off (this is Nietzsche’s initial reluctance) the attempt to invade his positive affirmation with the reactionary forces, that is, the attempt of monumental history to idolize him.

#### Affinity, Instinct, Will

We might re-begin with Nietzsche’s notion of affinity. That is, the capacity of a body acted upon and through by forces to provide resistance to some forces and to “go with” others. The more rigorous description of this idea is the will to power. Though in “*Ecce Homo*,” Nietzsche does not speak at any length about this concept, it is clear that in the first half of the book Nietzsche is providing a pedagogy for a great Health that lies in realizing, to the full extent of affirmation, the will to power. In this emphasis, I agree with Deleuze’s vision of, as Foucault might say, a “certain Nietzsche.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Foucault’s “What Is an Author?”

The evidence or substance of these early chapters is the explication of Nietzsche's decent (*Herkunft*), a genealogy of himself. Most basically, it traces his history as the marks of life and force upon his body, its fits, false starts, and affinities: "nutrition, place, climate, recreation, the whole casuistry of selfishness" (Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 256). However, it also begins to trace the origins of its value both as legacy (his dual nature as decadent and beginning) but also as complement to relations of forces—an internal principle of selection (affinity/resistance). At times, this latter element is highly anthropomorphized. Nietzsche has an "instinct" for health which leads him to make diagnostic assessments and take meliorating action. His health comes to stand as the product and proof of this instinct.

In this description, we are led to an uncomfortable place in which Nietzsche seems to suture together a radical empiricism of force with a mythic and individualistic soul. Here, we must go slowly: "At this point the real answer to the question, *how one becomes what one is*, can no longer be avoided. And thus I touch on the masterpiece of the art of self-preservation—of *selfishness*" ("Ecce Homo" 253). As it becomes clear, selfishness is an essential wisdom for health. It is first and foremost the embrace of all affinities which increases vitality. This vitality is on the one hand a genetic principle, but is also a measure of the resources one can draw on to ward off or resistant

negative forces. However, as Nietzsche cautions one should say “*No as rarely as possible*” (252). Saying “no” requires an expenditure of energy “wasted on negative ends.”

While health might be negatively measured as the capacity or largess to “say No,” this characterization teeters at the edge of sickness. For such expenditures, when they become too great attack not so much our health as a property, but as a principle. Thus, if the art of preservation is selfishness, then sickness its loss: “If anything at all must be adduced against being sick and being weak, it is that man’s really remedial instinct, his *fighting instinct* wears out” (229-30). Health depends on the vitality of this “fighting instinct” which directs us to affirm our affinities to act both our actions and reactions. The triumph of *ressentiment* and reactive forces is that forces are turned against themselves taken up in the “no” raised to the level of negation and ultimately a will to nothingness.

Any narrow sense of a “self,” that seeks a stable identity to bind time in a self-narrative is acting out a reactive force that attempts to seize and freeze the relations of forces of which it is the nexus. Thus, health is an affectivity or responsiveness to change, transformation, and overcoming. Psychologies of depth are entrenchments that express a will to weakness. Nietzsche postulates consciousness differently:

The whole surface of consciousness—consciousness is a surface—must be kept clear of all great imperatives. Beware even of every great word, every great pose! So many dangers that the instinct comes too soon to “understand itself” (254).

Yet, the crucial point lingers. Is understanding health as the cultivation of vitality through affirmation some sort of cosmic principle? In which instinct is an “ultimate” life force through which the pious individuals can realize themselves? Or, does it take a lesson of empiricist physiology and elevate it to the level of a principle?

To answer these questions, we must further explore the will to power. Of itself, the will to power has no definitive value. As with force, it corresponds to a typology of active/reactive. Deleuze describes the will to power as the will/principle/expression of a variety of becoming-actives and becoming-reactives. These are modes of its expression. More directly, if we continue with Deleuze’s explication “the essence of each force in its quantitative difference from other forces and this difference ... as the force’s quality,” then this difference “necessarily reflects a differential element of related forces—which is also the genetic element of the qualities of these forces” (Nietzsche 50). The will to power is the “sense” or “quality” of this calculus of forces.



As a creative principle, the will to power is healthy by affirming its affinities and transformations. Value is placed in affirmation and genetic principle as such. Selfishness is Nietzsche's figure for careful attention to this becoming without being distracted, seduced, or invaded by reactionary forces—forces of *ressentiment* which are not a will to health, but a will to nihilism.

Thus, the Nietzsche presented in "Ecce Homo" is the story of relations of forces, of their marks upon his body, of the qualities and senses in their permutation. Insofar as Nietzsche develops his affinities, he develops his health and comes nearer this healthful instinct "understanding itself." What must be remembered is the contingency of this development of the particularity of this will to power. It is the reason that Nietzsche regularly marvels at his good fortune and his destiny. The will to power is neither cosmic principle in the sense of law, nor a mechanistic description of force/nature:

If, on the contrary, the will to power is a good principle, if it reconciles empiricism with principles, if it constitutes a superior empiricism, this because it is an essentially plastic principle that is no wider than what it conditions, that changes itself with the

conditioned and determines itself in each case along with what it determines (Nietzsche 50).

“Ecce Homo” is an attempt to describe the will to power expressed as the differential principle or quality of a particular history of relations of forces, of a particular history of marks on the body of “Nietzsche.” Thus, Nietzsche is not offering some esoteric recuperation of something like “free will,” but rejecting ego consciousness, identity, and the dialectic as modes of understanding.

While “becoming what one is” entails a radical material situatedness of its expression, these relations of forces (i.e., historical circumstances) are not a causal agent (determinant) but rather a dynamism of series of forces operation on and through a body. In addition, the will to power, as both differential and genetic, is something like trajectory, but primarily responsiveness (both affinity and affirmation and resistance or negation). Or, in a Foucaultian formulation, the will to power is a shared principle of intelligibility of a network of forces (its sense or quality; contingent but strategic).

Thus, the stammer of the personal in “Ecce Homo” —Nietzsche’s taste in music, for example—though ludicrous as products or proofs of his health should rather be recast as contingent expressions of his particular will to power. They are signposts to the sense of his particular becoming what one is. In this sense, the will to power is terrifyingly “posthuman” concept that makes

the idiom of philosophy stammer and speaks most clearly through the indirect route of the aphorism. In his overcoming, Nietzsche speaks to the threat of reactive forces that “‘unself’ man” while simultaneously characterizing this danger as the selflessness of ego-logic. In the embrace of the will to power, which is properly a sort of immortality, we relinquish our grasp on the human.

It is this sense that Zarathustra is a devil to all last men. His truth is heretic and immoral. As it slices through the folds of *ressentiment*, produces the gong of the hammer on hollow idols, it postulates health as both the vitality of and transformations expressed through an affirmation of the contingent, differential, genetic, synthetic principle of the will to power.

Chance/Destiny

Does Nietzsche derive “health” from the facts of physiology? That is, does he develop a law or principle of health from an empirical understanding of something like the true nature of human beings? After all, doesn’t he diagnose constellations of forces as physiologies in order to make determinations of health? More pointedly, does he raise evaluations of particular cases to the status of a principle of health or derive from them a new version of human nature?

In this sense, his criticism of *ressentiment* would become a critique of the perversion and confusion of this innate, healthy instinct in humanity. Read this way, Nietzsche provides a nature posited through the body and against metaphysics; yet, nonetheless, he remains problematic for his retention of an essence and, furthermore, one derived from an equally problematic, empirical foundation.

Yet, doesn't Nietzsche's critique of science and philosophy emerge from these very grounds? As Deleuze notes, Nietzsche has two primary enemies in his transvaluation. The first are the utilitarians (moralists) and scientists (crude empiricists). The second are the Platonists and philosophical labourers (idealists):

In both cases philosophy moves in the *indifferent* element of the valuable in itself or the valuable for all. Nietzsche attacks both the "high" idea of foundation which leaves values indifferent to their own origin and the idea of a simple causal derivation or smooth beginning which suggests an indifferent origin for values (Nietzsche 2).

These approaches or understandings of phenomena make of all things mechanisms or means—determinations and final ends. Nietzsche's critique reveals these modes of thought as reactive, as only capable of grasping

reactions. When Nietzsche says “instinct,” rather than reading law or empirical principle, read force, will, or choice. The genealogical method seeks in a phenomenon the active force or will that is expressed.

As we have discussed, the will to power describes a relation to a complex of forces. Nietzsche’s difference from previous philosophers is that this will is itself understood as a force, though one inheres as the differential element of a quantity of forces. Thus, the will to power, as differential element, is the effect of or quality expressed in a particular, contingent, material relation of forces. Yet, as differential element it also introduces hierarchy—high/low, noble/base—which is its genetic power. For Nietzsche, the error of philosophy and science is that it is blind to this will. Its narrow focus recognizes only the reactions to this will as the whole of phenomenon. Instead, Nietzsche seeks to affirm and recognize the active, genetic, creative aspect of the will to power.

The active sense of this force can not be derived as a cause of phenomenon (empiricism) nor can it be deduced through *telos* of an object or final outcome it seeks to attain (idealism). Rather, it is a line of becoming. When one focuses on the historical march of forces from a mechanistic fashion one is blind to the active principle of forces and the whole of the world is seen as only reactive.

This will, force, or shared intelligibility of strategy is a will. And, as such, is a figure for a subjectivity that is no longer one of identity or ego consciousness but is rather a cosmic or comic subjectivity. The affirmation of this form of subjectivity is the embrace of a non-personal will, differential and genetic, inhering in singularities as the nexus of an immanent quantity of forces. Thus, to “become what one is,” does not mean to discover the truth of some metaphysical property of our “self,” nor is it to discover one’s self in the *telos* or mechanism of an ideal law or material mechanism.

The affirmation of the will to power is an overcoming, an embrace of the active, genetic aspect of subjectivity or will. To “become what one is” is not to discover it as a predicate, but to affirm it as a verb. Properly, then overcoming is to be overtaken: “– It was on these two walks that the whole of *Zarathustra I* occurred to me, and especially Zarathustra himself as a type: rather, he *overtook me*” (“Ecce Homo” 298). Is it any surprise that this health, this well-being, this inspiration will “appear inhuman?” (299). To affirm this inspiration, this becoming overtaken that “shakes one to the last depths and throws one down,” is to say “Yes to the point of justifying of redeeming even all of the past” (300, 308). It is in this affirmation, this redeeming of the past, that we must seek the particular sense of how “becoming what one is” may mean to become a “destiny.”

More specifically, to grasp the perhaps obscurely titled final section, “Why I am a Destiny?,” we would do well to consider the rather unique inflection and special resonance of the terms(s) necessity/destiny in Nietzsche’s work: “What Nietzsche calls necessity (destiny) is thus never the abolition but rather the combination of chance itself. Necessity is affirmed of chance in as much as chance itself is affirmed” (Nietzsche 26). Chance is the multiplicity of forces and phenomenon; thus, it is chaos. Necessity is the “one fatal number which reunites all the fragments of chance” (26). Or to put it otherwise, chance is the quantities of forces that comprise reality.

Though necessarily contingent, these quantities, these “fragments of chance” are reunited by necessity which is the will to power. It is the differential element of the dice-throw (and thus in a sense its effect), but also through its introduction of hierarchy is a genetic principle of overcoming and transformation. To affirm necessity and chance is then to affirm the will to power which actively reunites the “fragments of chance” and redeems the past: “to turn every ‘it was’ into a ‘thus I willed it’ — that alone should I call redemption” (“*Ecce Homo*” 309).

When Nietzsche diagnoses decadence as “‘rationality’ *against* instinct,” he historicizes consciousness as a reaction to a superior, active will that turns against itself to create interiority, as a means of warding off life. It condemns

existence (chance) as blameworthy and unjust, making suffering its proof and in a second move (by turning force against itself) makes suffering a means of divine justification of life. This is the perversion, the triumph of reactive forces, which Nietzsche attacks as Christian morality. Opposed to Christian morality, Nietzsche offers the Dionysian affirmation, the affirmation of chance as such, but also the affirmation of its necessity, that is, its will.

Nietzsche in "Why I am a Destiny," describes an affirmation of the active, genetic sense of the relation to a complex of forces that constitutes the individual or an event. It is an affirmation of a "becoming what one is ...". Thus, destiny and "becoming what one is" are no longer properties, states, predicates, but rather verbs. Nietzsche's immortality is his affirmation of a cosmic-multiple subjectivity. He is a destiny by virtue of his affirmation of a unique and world-historical event. It is a calamity which his philosophy recognizes or anticipates, and which, as active will, it precipitates:

"Have I been understood? – *Dionysus versus the Crucified*. –" (335).

### **The dread of destiny, approaching *Thanatos***

Though it would be putting it a bit harshly, one could imagine an assessment from Foucault, "Hebert Marcuse may be unhelpfully wedded to a



model of libidinal liberation and hypocritically concerned with the renewal of *Eros*.”<sup>2</sup> Then, why make a detour through his thought at all? Marcuse offers a decisive contribution in his considering these questions of the self and power in relation to the psychoanalytic perspective. Sharing a particular resonance with Nietzsche, Eros and Civilization pursues what may be a flawed project; though, as it pushes to itself to its own limit, it reveals the precipice of *Thanatos* and the death drive, establishing the importance of the unconscious flows of the Real.

#### The Critique: repressive hypothesis revisited

Repression carries with it the horizon of unrepressed libidinal expression of the pleasure principle. This is the retrogressive danger or unreality of phantasy and utopia—in unleashing the pleasure principle, the death instinct is also unleashed. In his characterization of a non-repressive reality principle, Marcuse establishes it as an archaic promise deferred. However, he suggests it might be fulfilled in an advanced civilization through overcoming the model of scarcity in theory and practice. It would mean a

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<sup>2</sup> Daniel Conway, in personal commentary characterizing this possible objection by Foucault.

rejection of the performance principle and the aggressive, transcendent mastery of the object by the subject. Marcuse's "Great Refusal" entails a rejection of the historically specific reactive forces that are produced as the reality principle. Rather, it postulates an attempt to shrug off the excesses of the superego and thereby reclaim the powers of fantasy for reality—producing a sensuous rationality. It leads to an ethics and morality of *Eros*—an aesthetics of existence.

Marcuse echoes Kant's call for a civilization that has been immature to become mature by being responsible for itself. It does so by performing the critique that asks the question, "What difference does today introduce with respect to yesterday?" While Kant's critique sought the proper limits of reason's purview, Marcuse asks rather instead how we might go beyond the limits of our historical reality principle and argues that it has already reached its own limit. Rather than monotonously uncovering lack and feeding the vicissitudes of *ressentiment* into an organization of alienated labor, Marcuse argues unrepressed *Eros* might manifest itself as pleasure in work and as the grounds of self-sublimations that affirm and cultivate a responsiveness to all manner of others and all manner of difference. Of historical necessity, it is a critical enterprise for becoming otherwise, hence, the resonance with Nietzsche.

While Marcuse's analysis provides a great deal of insight on these questions, I cannot help but wonder how Foucault might respond to this book. Here, I think his discussion in The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1 proves decisive. In Foucault's analysis, repression is a misnomer insofar as it retains the chimera of a pure freedom that can only be measured against representations of domination. On this account, Marcuse is sensitive to the charge. However, in his rejection of the repressive hypothesis Foucault diverges from Marcuse radically. For Foucault, it is not alienation of the pleasure that is the problem but the colonization of our desire through the production of capacities for pleasure. Thus, attempts to develop new pleasures seek, rather than liberation, the means of producing new capacities without further intensifying relations of power. It calls for an ethics that admits of no absolute grasping point for change.

Consequently, the question of resistance must be posed and answered through the local encounters of individuals and power. It is a question of determining the places where change is possible and desirable and of developing practices of freedom that would constitute a "non-repressive" ethics—an aesthetics of existence that does not covertly seek an absolute freedom for desire. There is no repressive law that may be overturned; there is no hope for a shift in attitude or orientation by which all social arrangements

would be inevitably revised. Rather it is a question of a microphysics of power that discovers pockets of resistance and seeks to identify the transversal links through which they might be mobilized. Where Marcuse offers a remembrance of the past that provides the promise of the future, we might interpose a history of the present which deploys historicized and local potential.

The hinge: surplus-repression

What started as subjection by force soon became “voluntary servitude,” collaboration in reproducing a society which made servitude increasingly rewarding and palatable (Marcuse xiii-viv).

Marcuse identifies the production of surplus as the sign of excess in our political and social society. In it, he locates the hope and possibility for unhinging social organization from the imperative imposed by scarcity. While this surplus on one hand gives rise to surplus-repression and even finer and more pervasive forms of social control, it has nonetheless overcome the ground (scarcity) which these repressive social and psychological modes developed to

overcome. Thus, while these trends are historical facts, they are no longer historical necessities.

However, I might complicate Marcuse's account by considering the work of Jose Gil in his recently translated "Metamorphoses of the Body." For Gil, excess and the surplus of power are the primary products of socio-political forms of control, governance, and leadership: "This no doubt the primary paradox of this power: being organized in an obedience contract, which is made up of rules of exchange and reciprocity, it necessarily brings about a surplus of power without any possible return" (33). Whereas Marcuse argues the historical achievement of a surplus of economic production bring with it an opportunity to leave behind the necessity of social surplus-repression, Gil argues that the state form of power is nothing more than a set intensified relations of obedience which find their object and function in producing a surplus of control. If the defeat of scarcity practically and theoretically has meant anything for the operation of power, it is simply that an outmoded justification or explanation of its necessity (the archaic confrontation with scarcity overcome through social organization) has been rendered suspect. It is this justification that has been threatened, not power itself.

While, of course, Gil has the advantage of writing nearly forty years after Marcuse, the most significant difference between the two is the linguistic

turn that psychoanalytic theory and philosophy have since taken. For Gil, the surplus of power produced through the “obedience contract” is the excess of force that accrues to the sign, a surplus that further precipitates new signs and meanings. Thus, the libidinal economy of the individual and of society is wrapped up in assemblages of forces and signs that constitute desire and produce excess as their means of expansion/intensification/repetition.

Marcuse’s importance and prescience lies on one hand in his identification of pleasure, fantasy, and sexuality as important sites in the struggle for social liberation or as the scene for the development of individual capacities that might escape or rather would operate in the interstices of mechanisms of social control. However, I think given our previous discussion, his identification of surplus/excess as the primary contemporary social and political hinge for resistance proves especially far sighted. After all, so much of poststructuralist thought could be characterized as an attempt to theorize the socius without reference to the categories of lack/scarcity. These categories are perhaps not so much outmoded archaisms but central features of the logic by which power has sought to replicate itself as the unending repetition of the same.

The contribution: *Thanatos* as Eternity

In his final chapter, “*Eros and Thanatos*,” Marcuse ties together several major themes of his analysis that I would like to revisit. Noting that “in many cases, the superego seems to be in secret alliance with the id,” Marcuse considers the possibility of a “pregenital, prehistoric, pre-oedipal ‘pseudo-morality’ prior to acceptance of the reality principle” (228). This possibility is an exfoliation of the hope or possibility that Marcuse previously discussed for unrepressed libidinal expression. More specifically, he identifies primary Narcissism as a model or platform for investing desire through self-sublimations that heighten and intensify pleasure/gratification with an aesthetic logic as its regulative principle. In the final chapter, Marcuse concerns himself with the foundations of a moral order, or the sensuous rationality he previously evoked; Marcuse seeks to recollect and reactivate the memory of “primal Mother-Right” (229).

As we shall see, the conflict presented is no longer *Eros* versus the reality principle—which would be a weaker conclusion insofar as it retains the horizon of a completely unrepressed functioning of a pleasure principle that is both ahistorical and essential to the nature of humanity. Rather, Marcuse presents a conflict between the reality principle and this other possibility of

social arrangements that appears as a phantasm (the super-id, primary narcissism, Mother-Right). It is a phantasm that is recollected out of time which not only follows *Eros*, but seeks to put *Thanatos* (the death drive) in a relation that supports, sustains, and guarantees life. Let's look more closely at how this relation is developed.

Over against the oedipal structure that represses the pleasure principle and develops the ego as a reaction to the antagonistic reality principle, Marcuse holds out the possibility of resuming a different approach to social relations:

The Narcissistic phase of individual pre-genitality "recalls" the maternal phase of the history of the human race. Both constitute a reality to which the ego responds with an attitude, not of defense and submission, but of integral identification with the "environment" (230).

For Marcuse, the contemporary reactivation of this attitude is contingent on conquering scarcity which is the continuing exigence of the reality principle. By automating the means of producing the necessities of life, the conservative drive of the death instinct (to eliminate not life, but tension and pain) can become a positive restraint on the appetites of the pleasure principle rather than the yawning mouth of destruction and nothingness. Here, we have



Marcuse's theoretical triumph of reversing the valuation of Nirvana as the terrifying and nihilistic vanishing point of *Eros* and *Thanatos*.

Marcuse argues that the Great Refusal of the oedipal arrangement and the conquering of time by memory allow for the reactivation of the primal scene of Narcissism and maternal authority. However, for this reactivation to be successful in contemporary societies, necessity and scarcity must be overcome or at least assuaged to a degree that allow the instincts of pleasure and death to come into positive alignment.

On one hand, this alignment positions *Thanatos* as a conservative check on the pleasure principle that is non-repressive (avoiding tension and pain while in the pursuit of pleasure) and leads to the possibility of social organization based on *Eros*. However, more primarily, the elimination of scarcity removes the threat of reality principle which normally forbids or disallows the individual's identification *with* his/her environment. Thus, it is also the condition of possibility for a reactivated primary narcissism which depends on this identification as the platform for the unrepressed investment of desire into the world. In this shift, the individual might understand him/herself as desire producing desire, rather than as a desire seeking to overcome lack. Which is to say that insofar as the individual identifies with

the world into which it invests its desire, it produces itself and its desire simultaneously and congruently.

To put it another way, the oedipal ego structure trains individual to understand themselves as shaped by outside threatening forces which repress their pleasure (or determine their desire) all roads are configured around submission or escape from these forces. Thus, the affirmation of *Eros* must be doubled as an affirmation of *Thanatos*. In order to embrace our pleasure, we must also develop a positive relation to the death instinct. We must do so both in order to avoid our susceptibility to reactive forces and organizations (the Great refusal, Nietzsche's nay-saying), but, even more importantly so that we can identify with our environment (primary Narcissism) rather than being repulsed by its destructive and antagonistic aspect. At this point the affirmative role of this death instinct is no longer the culmination of the embrace of *Eros* (as it tends to appear in Marcuse's analysis), but its prior condition. In Nietzschean parlance, we must give up our desire to condemn and judge life as unjust in order to affirm it and create higher values.

Jose Gil echoes Marcuse in noting that temporality poses a problem for the logic of gratification and the pleasure principle. Insofar as pleasure is fleeting and life constrained by death and destruction, pleasure is continually interrupted, thwarted, and diverted. This frustration is the essence of the

reality principle and the origin of reactive forces. As Gil points out, in traditional cultures the reactive apparatus so vividly described by Freud/Marcuse is held off by complex social mechanisms which prevent the advent of historicity.

If in Marcuse the past must be recollected and “joy wants eternity,” then for Gil eternity is the primary condition of a non-oedipal culture. In traditional cultures every care is taken to avoid the irrevocability of temporal time, the form of historicity in which time itself becomes the death instinct which devours all things inevitably and absolutely. Rather, the death instinct is charged with a positive power and role in life by conquering temporality:

... the world of the dead no longer appears as a past (a temporal dimension that incorporates two others, present and future), but precisely as a (present) world or a totality where time no longer flows. This world of the dead thus constitutes the barrier essential to the irreversible loss of time (Gil 67).

Eternity, which is known, grasped, and influenced via the world of the dead (memory) is the guarantor of joy/pleasure. It is the basis on which primary Narcissism can develop and blossom into an aesthetics of existence.

Nietzsche's eternal return is a vision of the final limits of historicity as the eternal return *of the same* (having a valence similar to Freud's apocalyptic

pessimism), yet it is also a recollection of archaic wisdom posited as a critique of historicity. It might be said that Marcuse brings about a similar critique by pushing Freud's work to its limits—pushing it over into the domain of Orpheus, the liberator. Just as Nietzsche discovers the great event, the divergent series or phantasmic doubling of Dionysus versus the Crucified, Marcuse offers us Orpheus versus Oedipus.

### **Nietzsche's Becoming History and the Question of the Real**

On this basis, it seems Marcuse and Nietzsche may be consonant. As we cited Nietzsche, "Have I been understood? – *Dionysus versus the Crucified*. –" ("Ecce Homo" 335). Isn't it after all, a question of the unbridled release of the creative force of *Eros* over and against the reactive conscious, the superego, the reality principle, the law? An affirmation that requires a great no-saying of the moralizing ego? Orpheus the liberator and ecstatic Dionysus? Foucault warns us that it is precisely in the presence of these figures that we should be suspicious:

Consequently, we are led to mistrust Dionysus and his Bacchantes even in their state of intoxication. As for the Return, must it be the perfect circle, the well-oiled millstone, which turns

on its axis and reintroduces things, forms, and men at their appointed time? ... Even Zarathustra could not tolerate this idea ... ("Theatrum Philosophicum" 192-3).

Here, Foucault critiques the eternal return as return of the same. The conceptual hierarchy of genus and species, the categorical thought, the triumph of Platonism: "Perhaps, the intolerable image of the circle is the last sign of a higher form of thought" (193). Instead of this endless reactivation of the past on the basis of the same and for the demands of identity, Foucault posits a Deleuzian interpretation: the eternal return as the "recurrence of difference" (192).

The being of becoming is no longer the solid thread of Ariadne which allows us to "rediscover the same light of day" (193). Instead, as the recurrence of difference it posits a being indefinitely present: one that is split and bifurcates, "a repetitive fibrillation of the present, the eternal and dangerous fissure fully given in an instant, universally affirmed in a single stroke" (194). However, if we have read Nietzsche at all, hasn't it been precisely this way; that is, we've read him along the lines of this particularly Deleuzian inflection which would posit "becoming what one is" as fundamentally a repetition of difference? Thus, Nietzsche health follows a

fantastic path of intensities through a becoming historical on the surface of the individual, a movement which dissolves the egoism of the self:

There is no Nietzsche-the-self, professor of philology, who suddenly loses his mind and supposedly identifies with all sorts of strange people; rather, there is the Nietzschean subject who passes through a series of states, and who identifies these states with the names of history: “*every name in history is I ...*” (Deleuze and Guattari, AntiOedipus 21).

Our earlier discussion of Nietzsche took care to avoid understanding Nietzsche as a crude empiricist who posits health as his metaphysical principle—an obscure vitalism. Perhaps, it should be granted Deleuze and Guattari that in Nietzsche history comes first: “We began by defining him as *Homo natura*, and lo and behold, he has turned out to be *Homo historia*” (21). What then is the nature of this history, the nature of an affirmation of its potential?

In his course on rhetoric, Nietzsche points out that “there is obviously no unrhetorical ‘naturalness’ of language to which one could appeal” (Friedrich Nietzsche 21). Of a piece with his perspectivism, Nietzsche argues that all language is essentially tropic and rhetorical: it is comprised of non-literal significations which therefore transmit only *doxa*, or “copies of sensations.” He further defines three primary modes of this creative facility.

Language is partial in the mode of synecdoche, transferable in the mode of metaphor, and reversible through metonymy.

For Nietzsche, the incredible illusion and swindle of knowledge or truth is that it limits the tropic nature of language in favor of human laws and measures, which it unsurprisingly finds everywhere. Thus, humanity spins knowledge out of itself like the web of a spider. Underneath the demands of truth, the tropic nature of language continues its transversal itinerary and creative production, though the human drive to metaphor is sublimated or delegitimated as the illusions or phantasms of myth and art. Ultimately, for Nietzsche, rhetoric exists as the unconscious, creative force of history that connects and modulates its multiple events and senses which are continually overwritten and “forgotten” as a prerequisite for the functionality of the Western regime of truth.

In the Deleuzian/Guattarian idiom, this unconscious production is the history of the real which operates through machinic assemblages of desire. In fact, the three primary modes of unconscious synthesis outlined in Anti-Oedipus loosely correspond with Nietzsche’s division of the tropic modes. First, there is the connective synthesis of production in which libidinal flows are cut into and interrupted to produce partial objects (synecdoche). Next, the disjunctive synthesis or the production of recording traces a series of

transversal connections between desiring machines on the surface of the body without organs (metaphor). Finally, the conjunctive synthesis or the production of consumption/consummation is the stage in which the remainder or residuum of the process (product) is grafted onto it and posited as its subject (metonymy).

Indeed, as Foucault points out, Deleuze and Guattari's fundamental formula "desire = production" is based on a reading of Nietzsche's eternal return as the recurrence of difference (the being of the becoming). When they argue that desiring machines only work by breaking down, though they are continually subjected to the reterritorializations of social organization and regimes of truth, Deleuze and Guattari echo Nietzsche's point that the creative force of language is unleashed when it is deterritorialized from the social organization and constraints of language.

A technology of the self which would also be a technology of the real operates on this immanent surface of history as desiring-production. Jose Gil advises us that we should understand force, as a moment in which the energy of pure intensities, is given a vectorial aspect and direction of application. Forces can only be understood in relation to other forces. As a vector, forces are inseparable from resistance. Power is then the intelligibility, will, or strategic deployment of these forces. For Gil, the balance of force or the



surplus that accrues to the great force is its differential element (echoing the Nietzschean sense). This surplus also exceeds signification, it therefore precipitates a sign that expresses and carries these forces. For Deleuze and Guattari this excess is a genetic, differential sense: the residuum of production or the product grafted onto the process entailing the entire problematic of its assembled flows.

In this move, they renew the Nietzschean concept of the will to power by using it as tool to critique and depart from a Lacanian theory of desire. Desire is theorized, following the model of the *objet a* (or partial object), as a machinic process in which desire equals production: desire produces desire and therefore itself. These processes of desiring production are managed through assemblages and regimes of signs which may introduce entrainments into the production of desire; for example, the Oedipal complex. In this formulation, Lacan's asignifying chains of code are superseded by a binary logic of connective synthesis; the unconscious processes which produce the Real proceed through deterritorializations which extend and momentarily escape only to be successively reterritorialized by the organizing system.

Historically, the primary image of this recapture or reterritorialization is the social repression introduced into the recording stage of the process of desiring-production. Oedipus is a figure for the dialectic of rational thought

and the conquering the object by the subject—self and Other, identity, the whole reactive apparatus. In contradistinction, Deleuze and Guattari seek to trace vectors of deterritorialization, following them as they operate on their own terms. On this plane, we follow the surface. The body without organs is their term for this surface of inscription, a term for understanding the self as a valence or fold of the outside: it is a way of remembering that the limits of desiring-production are immanent to its process.

“Becoming what one is,” then, would entail a new relationship to the process of production and the residuum of the event—the surplus that subjects take and mistake for themselves. Just as Nietzsche describes a concept as the residuum of a metaphor, Deleuze and Guattari posit the subject as a residuum and consummation of desiring-production—a product grafted onto the process:

The subject spreads itself out along the entire circumference of the circle, the center of which has been abandoned by the ego. At the center is the desiring-machine, the celibate machine of the Eternal Return. A residual subject of the machine, Nietzsche-as-subject garners a euphoric reward (*Voluptas*) from everything that this machine turns out, a product that the reader had

thought to be no more than the fragmented *oeuvre* by Nietzsche  
(AntiOedipus 21).

Even if we are satisfied with this fortuitous production, across the circle of production, recording, consumption, what is it then that supplies the surface of the return? Or to put it another way, if desiring-production is a radicalized vision of *Eros*, then what is the figure for *Thanatos*? It is through these questions that a schizophrenic technology emerges.

those fantastic machines

Difference recurs; and being, expressing itself in the same manner with respect to difference, is never the universal flux of becoming; nor is it the well-centered circles of identities. Being is return freed from the curvature of the circle; it is Recurrence. Consequently, the death of three elements: of Becoming, the devouring Father—mother, in labor; of the circle, by which the gift of life passes to the flowers each springtime; of recurrence—the repetitive fibrillation of the present, the eternal and dangerous fissure fully given in an instant, universally affirmed in a single stroke (Foucault, “*Theatrum Philosophicum*” 194).

If in the end, Marcuse's analysis brings us to the point at which *Eros* must be reconciled with *Thanatos*, then Deleuze and Guattari's radical reconceptualization places the death instinct in the service of life, as the surface of desiring production. The body without organs emerges as a moment of resistance against desiring-production; the processes of unconscious synthesis are only possible on the basis of the body without organs which falls back on this production both on the level of the individual and the social.

On the one hand, the desiring machines of the individual work by breaking down, producing antiproduction (*Thanatos*) in and of themselves. Primary repression occurs in the figure of the body without organs, or the death instinct which seeks the elimination of excitation and intensity in a primary catatonia ('I periodically need to take a break from work'). Production is experienced as a series of intensive states modulating through the transversal recording and the euphoric reward of its consumption ('I work, then stop work, then start again, until I get done: whatever I did is what I was trying to do.')

On the other hand, technical and social machines produce value as surplus by wearing out. Antiproduction is thus found in the extrinsic conditions of the reproduction of the process. In this version of secondary

repression, antiproduction is experienced as failure and the death instinct becomes an engine for the production of lack: it becomes as a means of appropriating the surplus of deterritorialized unconscious flows ('My work is not my own: I work against time so that when I am done, I can leave it alone').

Deleuze and Guattari offer three primary types or assemblages of this relation of production/antiproduction in the production of recording on the surface of the body without organs. In the paranoiac machine, desiring-production is experienced as the constraint and demand of an external law or organization. This recognition of primary repression in the body becomes the neurotic the acceptance of a higher power that is Oedipus. Oedipus provides a lens through which everything becomes stable and organized, however, at an expensive price introduced through lack: "It is only in the structure [the symbolic] that the fusion of desire with the impossible is performed, with lack defined as castration" (*AntiOedipus* 306). This would accord with Marcuse's analysis of secondary repression as prefigured and preceded by a primary repression of desire. It is not the fiction of scarcity or lack that is revealed in reality, but the surplus-repression of the symbolic and its investment of desire. The representation of the paranoiac machine: the devouring Father of becoming.

Marcuse posits a contrary path through the primal scene of the mother in which the individual identifies with his or her environment and thus no longer experiences persecution, but possibility. Deleuze and Guattari agree with this analysis insofar as it posits the tension of forces of attraction/repulsion, and recognizes their activations in the Symbolic and Imaginary. If the paranoiac machine reacts to desiring-production as persecution, there is also a second machine that moves past this mode of production in order to attract the forces of production. The miraculating machine follows the transversal paths on the surface of recording, scrambling the codes of the Oedipal triangle, indulging in perverse fantasies. The representation of the miraculating machine: the laboring Mother, pregnant with desire.

However, Deleuze and Guattari immediately follow this binary over into the continued process of desiring-production. The forces of attraction/repulsion that emerge from the body without organs as surface and antiproduction become the source of disjunctive intensities that may be followed a mode of schizophrenic genealogy. Along these lines, Nietzsche's becoming history overflows itself and is overtaken by the call of Zarathustra which betrays both the devouring father and the primal mother: " 'Alas! Man

will return eternally, abject man will return eternally'" (Nietzsche Qtd. in Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum" 193).

Deleuze and Guattari diverge resolutely at this point from the Marcusean project: an identification with our own desire pursued as the key to libidinal liberation continues to be susceptible to the fascisms buried in our very desires. The abject return in which we are made hostages to history is retained in both of these models; it will be followed by a third:

Let us borrow the term "celibate machine" to designate this machine that succeeds the paranoiac machine and the miraculating machine, forming a new alliance between the desiring machines and the body without organs so as to give birth to a new humanity or a glorious organism" (AntiOedipus 17)

If the celibate machine is libratory, it is only insofar as it recognizes itself as the residuum of the process of production. Rather than, merely, the attraction/repulsion of the prior arrangements, the celibate machine embraces the extreme contingency and chance played out on the surface produced between the body without organs and desiring-production. Tracing the drift of disjunctions recorded, the intensities of these various engagements of these attractive and repulsive forces, the celibate machine unleashes the flows of

unconscious synthesis as its itinerary. In this mode, desiring-production becomes a continually renewed problem of movement, rather than the search for a stable platform for identity, right, rule, or desire. It posits, above all, an ethics of transformation.

To reconcile *Thanatos* with *Eros*, to put death in the service of life, means to engage them as the attractive/repulsive forces of the outside with which we might enter into union in order to produce a new and glorious organism. Isn't this celibate machine which experiences its recording as the process of production, a technology of the real? Foucault posits the form of this technology as the recurrence of the body as surface and its becomings as the repetition of its difference. Perhaps, it is the affirmation, the figure, of chance affirmed as necessity: the destiny of those who would become otherwise.

### **Ethics/Flight**

The observation of his own valetudinary states led Nietzsche to live in growing perplexity concerning what, in his own experience, would be valuable or not—and always in terms of two notions that would come to preoccupy him more and more: *health* and *morbidity*. The *symptoms* of *vigour* and *decadence*, of



*degeneration* and *strength* could be detected only by means of a distinction which, if it were to be rigorous, could gain only in ambiguity. This distinction is what grounds the term ‘value’—in itself so equivocal—and the term ‘power’, which is the source of every active or sterile value. Because of this mobile base, a kind of *fault line* ran through Nietzsche’s entire mental effort: what if the act of thinking in the end, were nothing but a symptom of total impotence? Whence his reversal of Parmenides’ statement, ‘*What is thinkable is real and what is real is thinkable,*’ into its opposite: *What is thinkable is unreal*—which destroys every principle of a received reality (Klossowski 59).

“Becoming ‘what one is’” recapitulates a series of themes developed throughout the dissertation. First, it mirrors the genealogical move of returning to the Greeks in order to discover disparity and dissension at the origins of a dilemma. Where in the first chapter, Isocratean rhetoric was posited as an anachronistic critique of foundationalist rhetorics, Foucault’s genealogy analyzes the development of Western technologies of power as they emerged from the incremental universalization and codification of the practices of the care of self that began with the Greeks. The middle section

dealing with Nietzsche's approach to health and ethics echoes the second chapter in describing the necessity of not merely overcoming the obstacles or symptoms of sickness but of actively choosing the forces through which we might affirm our relation to ourselves and claim life as the principle of an ever renewed vitality. Finally, in the analysis of the Marcusean project of uniting *Eros* and *Thanatos*, it becomes clear that seeking the unrepression of desire or pursuit of possibility as such is in its own right no less a submission to the higher power of the obligation of truth. Whether we submit to an obsession with control or seek to go mad with desire, in either case we end up forfeiting the ethical project of becoming 'what one is.'

Ultimately, the fourth chapter echoes the previous chapters in another and perhaps more important sense. Each chapter in its own way arrives at form of non-conclusion, that is, a new expression of the dilemma of becoming otherwise that must be taken up by the next chapter: the creative task of seeking for what is new—becomes the dilemma of the disabled individual who must overcome sickness through a confrontation with power—becomes the task of artist of life who challenges the configurations of possibility by diagnosing interpretive constraint—becomes the genealogical task of an ethics that eschews submitting to a higher power. The question of how one becomes otherwise is the surface, body, or non-ground repeated through the contexts of

rhetoric, possibility, and ethics in order to produce new differences and multiply its possible senses of application. Perhaps, the affirmation of chance leads us finally to discover singular paths which admit of no final perspective of judgment or universal *telos*, but rather hold tenaciously to the necessity of acting without the comfort of knowing any inviolable form of a “received reality.”

The final chapter, “Ecstatic Practice,” also rehearses these themes of the dissertation in its own way; it considers the pedagogical value of the betrayal of the obligation to truth, as in Nietzsche’s reformulation of Parmenides: “*What is thinkable is unreal*” (Klossowski 59). In Carlos Castaneda’s novel, betrayal functions on several levels of the narrative across two dimensions of teaching. Most directly, don Juan continually betrays his apprentice to the vicissitudes of a series of experiences with non-ordinary states of consciousness. Across these individual assays, the novel proposes a technique of the sorcerer in which one manages the encounter with irrational and the unknown through patient application of the rhythms of preparation, experimentation, debriefing. Even while don Juan undermines his pupils’ sense of reality, he also supplies indications of how Carlos may experience various qualities of the experience as invigorating or draining, affirming or negative. Though Carlos the pupil submits fully to direction of his master, the form of this submission denies any

consistent rule of truth by which a rational construct of the teachings can become available. Rather, at every point Carlos' attempt to bridge the gap between perceived reality and the "as if true, as if false" of the experiences are thwarted and redirected.

However, this form of instruction through betrayal is also recapitulated at the level of the novel and its reader. Insofar as Castaneda's novel is read as neither strictly true (anthropological valid) nor as false (inconsistent with available experiences) it elides any easy categorization by its readers. Furthermore, following the analysis of literature as equipment for living, the novel functions as a device for inviting us to "make ourselves over in the image of the imagery" (Burke, Philosophy 116). The reader finds him or herself overtaken by the experience of Carlos and in similar way wrestles with irresolvable question of its authenticity and its value as a perspective for producing new possibilities for life.

Ultimately, the final chapter explores the irreducible and serial exposure to alterity as a figure for learning and thought. It offers a figure for the dissertation as whole in which the serial expression of the task of becoming otherwise is pursued across a variety of domains and idioms. In each instance, it proposes a new form or expression of this dilemma and provides an orientation with reference to values of health and sickness. It seeks to explore

the ways in which each case these terms fold into each other and traces their modulations and transformations across the series.

# ECSTATIC PRACTICE



Figure 6: CHAPTER 5

Your only choice will be between a goat's ass and the face of the God, between sorcerers and priests (116).

– Deleuze and Guattari, a thousand plateaus

When he died in 1998, Carlos Castaneda left a legacy of 10 books (which have been translated into 17 languages and sold over eight million copies) along with four decades of controversy—the enduring source of his notoriety. Given the mystery he cultivated during his lifetime, Castaneda would undoubtedly be amused that he continues to make headlines. As recently as 2003, the New York Times ran an article describing an academic feud that erupted into litigation centered on the legitimacy of Castaneda's work.<sup>1</sup> This feud is of a piece with the original controversy of Castaneda's career over whether or not his work would be considered anthropology or fiction. Over the last several decades, the judgment has decidedly been for the latter. Though the popular reception of Castaneda has been consistently favorable and lucrative, his critics have often been harsh. Castaneda's corpus has been variously dismissed as inauthentic ethnography, amateur literature, and even

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<sup>1</sup> "Dr. Fikes, now 51, said that Dr. Furst and another anthropologist, Dr. Barbara Meyerhoff, helped Mr. Castaneda fabricate descriptions of rituals. He accused Dr. Furst of exaggerating or misrepresenting practices like waterfall jumping and peyote enemas, eventually organizing the accusations into a 1993 book, 'Carlos Castaneda: Academic Opportunism and the Psychedelic Sixties.'" (Romero).

as sham spiritualism from a “plastic shaman.” The latter criticism is perhaps the most damning. Ward Churchill, for one, decries the “profitable enterprise [that] apparently began with a number of literary hoaxes undertaken by non-Indians such as Carlos Castaneda.” For Churchill, Castaneda is one of many authors who took advantage of first hippie culture and later the New Age movement by “writing bad distortions and outright lies about indigenous spirituality for consumption in the mass market” (26).

While such criticisms should not be taken lightly, I think it is a mistake to dismiss Castaneda. Instead, I would situate his work as a unique contribution to the tradition of underground psychedelic science that emerged in the 1960s and 70s. As part of what Foucault would call a subjugated knowledge, Castaneda’s work provides novel approaches to understanding and engaging the psychedelic/ecstatic experience. Furthermore, insofar as it is a challenge or threat to the discipline of anthropology and the conventions of ethnography, Castaneda’s work can be characterized as part of “an insurrection against the centralizing power-effects that are bound up with the institutionalization and working of any scientific discourse” (Society Must Be Defended 7). As Mary Douglas avers “one of the intriguing aspects of [Castaneda’s] series for anthropologists is to read it as a struggle between two sets of teachers. UCLA versus the old Indian sorcerers” (26).



Perhaps, one of the greatest obstacles to the study of psychedelic and ecstatic practices has been the persistence of the question “what does it mean”; that is, the obsessive drive to understand the meaning of the experience: in what way is it authentic or verifiable? Following the injunction of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari and through an engagement with their philosophy, I will ask a different question of Castaneda’s most famous work: “what does it do?” What it *does* is to demand a different kind of reading—to be read as a recipe. The Teachings of don Juan: a Yaqui way of knowledge denies the chain of signification (by eliding the question of its own authenticity), casting the reader out along a line of flight to be reterritorialized as a *brujo*’s apprentice; it is a recipe for becoming sorcerer—itsself, a technique of ecstasy. More simply, my contention is that Castaneda’s work can be profitable read as a variety of ecstatic pedagogy.

### **“Did I really fly?”**

Originally published in 1968, The Teachings is ostensibly the account of field research that took place from summer of 1960 until the fall of 1965. Carlos Castaneda, at the time an anthropology student at UCLA, describes meeting don Juan, a Yaqui Indian, at a Greyhound bus stop in Arizona. This meeting

proves fortuitous and by August of '61, Carlos becomes don Juan's apprentice and is introduced to the mysteries of the *brujo* and set on the path of the Man of Knowledge. The resulting narrative is a hybrid of many genres. It has been described as ethnography, New Age fiction, a mystical self-help book, or even as a Trip Manual (in the tradition of Timothy Leary, John C. Lilly, and others).<sup>2</sup> Of the criticism devoted to Castaneda's corpus and especially his first effort, the majority is motivated by the question of its authenticity. Is it authentic? Does it matter? If not, can it be useful anyway?

As far as the anthropological community is concerned, Castaneda's work has been effectively deemed inauthentic. As Stephen Murray points out, science is structurally adept at denying the existence of suspect work:

Not seeking academic appointment, not presenting his work to scientific publications, and not submitting to any critical inquiry, Castaneda placed himself outside the science of anthropology.

Anthropologists, in turn, were content to leave him to his

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<sup>2</sup> Neville Drury provides an excellent discussion of the various types of "Trip Manuals" throughout the history of Western psychedelic and mystic exploration: "Besides Castaneda, two other people [Leary and Lilly], at least, have made an important contribution ... first of these was Timothy Leary ...he endeavored to structure altered states of consciousness in such a way that they produced elevating, beneficial results. ...valuable correlation of 'The Tibetan Book of the Dead' with modes of hallucinogenic and mystical consciousness. ...anyone undertaking the inner voyage needs signposts" (4).

fantasies and to his readers, though many of his readers were  
mistaking his work for anthropology.<sup>3</sup>

Castaneda's popularity and the pseudo-scientific controversy his work induced could be considered a small reprisal for this exclusion: a return of the repressed.

Richard de Mille can be considered representative of another major type of authenticator to weigh on the issue. He argues that though Castaneda may not be a sound anthropologist, he does provide an insightful and largely "accurate" (if composite) dramatization of shamanic apprenticeship. An editor and author of two volumes of Castaneda debunkery, De Mille, provides a fascinating catalogue of the "un-cited sources" of Castaneda's material. By retracing and reconstructing a line of reference and signification to an authoritative source, De Mille is ultimately able to deem Castaneda's work valid, if inauthentic.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Castaneda is successfully reterritorialized by a mechanism of referential authenticity.

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<sup>3</sup> As Stephen O. Murray points out in "The Invisibility of Scientific Scorn," science is structurally adept at denying the existence of suspect work. His essay suggests that Castaneda has always already been exiled to the desert: "Not seeking academic appointment, not presenting his work to scientific publications, and not submitting to any critical inquiry, Castaneda placed himself outside the science of anthropology. Anthropologists, in turn, were content to leave him to his fantasies and to his readers, though many of his readers were mistaking his work for anthropology" (200-201).

<sup>4</sup> See Castaneda's Journey and the Don Juan Papers, especially "The Shaman of the Academe" and "Validity is not Authenticity: Distinguishing Two Components of Truth" from the latter.

Finally, psychoanalytic interpreters deepen the scope of referential authenticity by treating the text as symptom or expression of an unconscious complex. In M. D. Faber's analysis, for example, Carlos relationship with don Juan is reduced and recoded to the developmental role of the mother (402). Ultimately, the psychoanalytic perspective works to tie the phantasms of Carlos's flight back to himself, to reterritorialize his visions through the foreclosure of the Oedipal triangle.

Generally, then, Castaneda's interlocutors have operated as guardians of science, detectives of significance, and psychoanalytic interpreters in their readings of Castaneda. They have proceeded by asking what the text means. Yet, we do have a choice, a choice "between sorcerers and priests." How would we begin to ask what the text does? We are not left entirely without guidance. After his first confrontation with extraordinary experience of shamanic flight, Carlos posits the question and don Juan offers his response:

Finally, before I left that evening, I had to ask him, "Did I really fly, don Juan?"

"That is what you told me. Didn't you?"

"I know, don Juan. I mean, did my body fly? Did I take off like a bird?"

"You always ask me questions I cannot answer. You flew.

That is what the second portion of the devil's weed is for... That

is all I can tell you. What you want to know makes no sense.

Birds fly like birds and a man who has taken the devil's weed

flies as such [*el enyerbado vuela asi*]."

"As birds do? [*Asi como los pajaros?*]."

"No, he flies as a man who has taken the weed [*No, asi*

*como los enyerbados*]" (93).

Don Juan tells us: you cannot understand the sorcerer as a priest, that is by interpretation, by discovering meaning, by deferring to the regime of signification. More crucially, it is only by abandoning these habits of thought that we can travel the itinerary of the sorcerer.

Through the persona of "Carlos," Castaneda models the training of the apprentice, the difficult process of giving up interpretation, authenticity, and rational explanation in his engagement with the instruction of don Juan. This passage prefigures this movement and provides the most elementary indicator of how the text should be read or how its recipe should be followed. Rather than evaluating or understanding Castaneda's work on the basis of scientific, literary, psychoanalytic disciplines, we should suspend their criteria in order to allow the "non-ordinary" states the book produces to overtake us. As a means

of explicating and gaining a grasp on these states and the book's instruction, I will rely on two of the most philosophically rigorous sorcerers available—Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

Why it matters if we're Indian or not

One of the several instances in which Deleuze and Guattari refer to Castaneda describes his apprenticeship and the lessons of don Juan as an exhortation to dwell in the presignifying semiotic: "Stop! You're making me tired! Experiment, don't signify and interpret! Find your own places, territorialities, deterritorializations, regime, lines of flight!" (a thousand plateaus 139). They are quite right to note that don Juan's ultimate goal is for Carlos to "stop the world." In an interview with Sam Keen, Castaneda describes the process this way: "Don Juan's teaching is that psychotropics are used to stop the flow of ordinary interpretations ... to shatter certainty. But drugs alone do not allow you to stop the world. That is why Don Juan had to teach me sorcery" (114). Though the dissolution produced by psychotropics is a means for entering into the presignifying semiotic, it is not sufficient for the apprenticeship. Sorcery is the necessary complement to this dissolution, its perfection, its technique. The apprenticeship will belong to the postsignifying

regime, authoritarian and passionate. It is a regime of exodus from the despotic and paranoid signifying regime of signs (a thousand plateaus 121).

As a subject of the signifying regime, Carlos must betray and be betrayed by the “face of God” in order to break the hold of signification. This necessity is the hallmark of the unique psychological relationship we witness between the prophet and God, and between our Western apprentice and his sorcerer Master. When Carlos first asks to be taught about peyote, don Juan refuses on the grounds that Carlos does not know his heart: “If you were an Indian your desire alone would be sufficient” (The Teachings 14). Carlos begins his apprenticeship dwelling in the realm of interpretations, signification—the realm of a Western, rationalistic tradition. It is for this reason that he must face a test. The nature of the test prefigures the postsignifying regime that will structure the teachings: it will “display the following characteristic traits of the subjective semiotic: the double turning away, betrayal, and existence under reprieve” (a thousand plateaus 129). Carlos will have to prove himself capable of the impossible.

Posing the completion, the actualization, of an impossible test constitutes don Juan’s founding betrayal. He turns away from Carlos and refuses to help him. He puts his disciple in a state of indefinite reprieve (if you fail, the teaching will not begin). Carlos describes the task: “[to] find a ‘spot’

(*sitio*) on the floor where I could sit without fatigue” (The Teachings 14). At first, the task seems impossible, foolhardy, and a trick. How could such a spot be real, be true? Eventually, these thought patterns break down; Carlos leaves aside the field of possible and simply tries. He eventually discovers two spots, one of which he finds it unbearable to occupy. Exhausted, he falls asleep, only to be woken with congratulations of success from don Juan. Carlos turns suspicious, rational. Though he doubts the “authenticity” of his discovery; when challenged by don Juan to occupy the other weak or bad spot, his is unable.

The initiatory test has two results: first, the postsignifying regime of authority and passion has been prefigured; and, second, Carlos has proven an aptitude for refrain—the ultimate technology of the sorcerer. More specifically, Carlos was able to experience a “visual” rhythm (the means of finding the two spots)<sup>5</sup>, and, with the guidance of don Juan, to further experience these rhythms as territorializing or expressive (i.e., they have

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<sup>5</sup> “Suddenly, at a point near the middle of the floor, I became aware of another change in hue. At a place to my right, still in the periphery of my field of vision, the greenish yellow became intensely purple. The purple faded into a pale, but still brilliant, color which remained steady for the time I kept my attention on it” (The Teachings 16). The previous describes Carlos’s discovery of what later is revealed to be his ‘spot.’ Here, is how he discovers the bad spot, or as Don Juan calls it, “the enemy”: “The uniform chartreuse I was seeing all over the area turned, at one spot to my right, into a sharp verdigris. It remained for a moment and then abruptly metamorphosed into another steady hue, different from the one I detected earlier” (17).



qualities—good/bad, invigorating/draining).<sup>6</sup> The apprenticeship may now begin.

### **Authority/Passion—The Regime of Apprenticeship**

... not only does the old man behave in a way that disappoints Castaneda's search for the nurturing, protective mother, for the good object, he behaves in a way that actually deepens or widens the split in his pupil, in a way that catalyzes an intensification of the original ambivalence (Faber 402).

In M. D. Faber's psychoanalytic essay on Castaneda, everything is the mother. Everything includes two gnats, a pool of fog, and, most importantly, don Juan on numerous occasions; in one instance, he is taken to literally represent himself as a woman to better become the mother.<sup>7</sup> The basis for this

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<sup>6</sup> "The refrain is rhythm and melody that have been territorialized because they have become expressive—and have become expressive because they are territorializing" (a thousand plateaus 317).

<sup>7</sup> "The most striking instance of this occurs toward the conclusion of The Teachings where the master, changing his male identity to female and explicitly adopting the appearance of the evil sorceress, the diablera, succeeds through a series of strange behaviors in reducing his apprentice to a quivering jelly ..." (399).

interpretation is don Juan's pattern of betrayal and desertion. As we all know, this is what bad mothers do.

Of course, Faber is correct in noting that Carlos experiences fear provoked by don Juan's program of betrayal. Yet, what is significant is that, in the regime of apprenticeship, the line of flight has been given a positive value. Although it is necessary for Carlos to confront his fear (the first enemy of the Man of Knowledge), don Juan is not seeking some sort of shamanic/psychoanalytic cure. Rather, if Carlos has some sort of mother complex that can be provoked to produce a line of flight, so much the better. Through psychotropic sessions and shamanic instruction, don Juan seeks "to shatter [Carlos's] certainty" and to train him to follow "the line [that] receives a positive sign."

In the authoritarian-passional regime, betrayal is the catalyst of this flight. Carlos, the apprentice, is betrayed by his master in two senses. The first sense of betrayal is registered in the averted faces of the don Juan's many masks: inscrutable sage, decadent guru, mad trickster, dangerous sorcerer. Across all of these moods and styles, don Juan pursues a flexible program of spontaneous disorientation whose critical moments are woven together through the endless elucidations of instruction. Carlos becomes increasingly paranoid and susceptible to suggestion. He finds himself drifting inexorably

further into the murky tangles and sly complexities of the old confidence game:

It is characteristic of the guru, then, to work upon the whole personality of the disciple. He is not just teaching them new things, but remodeling their perceptual and emotional responses. And if he is to achieve the necessary ascendance, he must be regarded as infallible (Minogue 180).

Of course, this knowing suspicion of the Master's infallibility is ultimately a misdirection. Though the Master continually seeks to frame a plane of consistency that is the teachings, the apprentice is also continually betrayed to new ecstatic experiences *which must be faced alone*. This is the second and more profound betrayal: the Master's authority necessarily abandons the apprentice at the threshold of ecstatic experience. Whereas in the despotic regime, "everything is public, and everything that is public is so by the virtue of the face [of God, of the despot]," in the postsignifying regime, "god averts his face" and there is a double turning away of subject and authority (a thousand plateaus 115, 123).

Consider the curious way Carlos's first psychotropic experience is administered: don Juan decides it is time for Carlos to meet Mescalito, but the mescaline, the peyote, will be offered to him by a stranger. Don Juan explains

the necessity this way: “Perhaps you are not agreeable to ‘him’ and ‘he’ won’t like you, and then you will never be able to know ‘him’ with affection, as one should; and our friendship will be broken” (The Teachings 21). Don Juan betrays Carlos to Mescalito; Carlos is offered up through the mediation of the stranger and is delivered to the belly of the whale.<sup>8</sup>

The case is the same with the datura experiences. Although don Juan leads Carlos through all the steps leading up to the session, he leaves as Carlos is about to smear the paste on his body. One lizard, its mouth sewn shut, will travel out in the world to discover the answer Carlos’s question; the other, its eyes sewn shut, sits on Carlos’s shoulder and whispers the sister’s answer in his ear. At one point during the “heard-saw” vision, Carlos tries to look at the lizard on his shoulder; of course, he fails because the nature of the experience is a communication produced by a double turning away. He and lizard are “averted faces, in profile” (a thousand plateaus 123). In all of the psychotropic sessions, we find varying examples of these themes of secrecy and turning away. For example, in dealing with both Mescalito and datura, don Juan

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<sup>8</sup> Consider Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of the Jonah and the double turning away of the prophet and his God: “hiding and fleeing and betraying anticipates the will of God more effectively than if he had obeyed” (a thousand plateaus 124).

forbids Carlos to share certain information with him.<sup>9</sup> In this way, he forces his pupil to operate by secrecy and turn away from his Master.

For a final example, we turn to the “little smoke” or “humito.” Under the influence of the “little smoke,” Carlos’s body is dissolved. He literally falls through the floor and walls. In a revealing exception to nearly all of the other psychotropic sessions, don Juan is present for the duration of the experience and takes an active role in guiding Carlos during his intoxication. As Carlos feels the first effects of the “little smoke,” he notices don Juan looking at him. However, a moment later when he calls to don Juan for help, he notices that: “He [don Juan] kept on looking at me, sideways, as though he didn’t want to turn his head to face me fully” (*The Teachings* 109). Furthermore, as the experience progresses and don Juan fails to “help,” Carlos undergoes a remarkable transformation: “Something seemed to stop inside me. There were no more thoughts. I saw don Juan coming and I hated him. I wanted to tear him apart. I could have killed him then, but I could not move” (100). The

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<sup>9</sup> Don Juan says of Mescalito: “‘You are on your own now,’ he said. ‘The protector has accepted you. I will be of very little help to from now on. You don’t have to tell me anything more about your relationship with him. You know his name now; and neither his name, nor his dealing with you, should ever be mentioned to a living being’” (*The Teachings* 109-110). Also, in dealing with the datura plant, Carlos is instructed, “nobody must know the place, not even I! That is the way the replanting must be done” (53).

scenario ends with don Juan singing a lullaby to Carlos, which calms him and wins back his affection.

This episode is a rather succinct summation of the themes of the authoritarian-passional regime. First, there is the “averted faces, in profile” as don Juan is unable to look directly at Carlos. In addition, Carlos is betrayed by don Juan who “refuses to help.” This betrayal serves to send Carlos down a passional line of flight that he experiences as terrifying, but it succeeds in getting him to “stop the flow of ordinary interpretations.” Furthermore, although Carlos betrays don Juan in his desire to kill him, his eruption of anger only better serves the aims of don Juan: Carlos’s anger allows him to “stop the world” and compose himself while under the effect of “humito.”<sup>10</sup> This is the hallmark of the passional subject who serves the master best through his betrayal.

However, it should also be noted that the deterritorialization produced by the psychotropic substance and the constitution of the passional subject are coextensive with a highly orchestrated technique of sorcery. That is, the episode not only seeks to dissolve the organization of Carlos’s consciousness and subjectivity, but to reterritorialize Carlos in new fashion. In this particular

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<sup>10</sup> “But Jonah, in fleeing from the face of God, did exactly what God had wanted ... he did it even more effectively than God had wanted ...” (a thousand plateaus 123).

scenario, don Juan replicates the recipe for the ordeal of dismemberment and rebirth described by Mircea Eliade as a key component of Shamanic tradition.<sup>11</sup>

Carlos loses his body and suffers the ordeal of its dismemberment, which is echoed, and manifest through his fear and anger at don Juan's refusal to "help." In the final step of the session, Carlos is reconstituted with a new celestial body provided by his helper or psycho-pomp (i.e., don Juan). Don Juan's lullaby soothes Carlos, whose "resentment changed into longing—a joyous affection for don Juan" (The Teachings 100). This maneuver of betrayal and reterritorialization through a refrain (don Juan's "melody" brings Carlos back to himself) prepares Carlos to accept don Juan's instructions: "He said that I must struggle not to fall asleep; that I no longer had a body and was free to turn into anything I wanted ... And I was free, moving with tremendous lightness and speed in water or air. I swam like an eel; I contorted and twisted and soared up and down at will" (100-101). As we have seen, this "exception" does, in fact, prove the rule. Don Juan, in the follow up discussions, admits "he was afraid to look at me [Carlos]" (103). When Carlos wonders if it is possible to see others, or himself in a mirror, don Juan declares emphatically

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<sup>11</sup> Across a variety of cultures and traditions, including a variety of permutations, Eliade describes the practices of Shamanic initiation in which the candidate suffers a "symbolic ritual of mystical death, sometimes suggested by dismemberment of the body and renewal of organs" (53). In various traditions, the neophyte's body may be implanted with magical crystals, receive the bones of an ancestral Shaman, gain magical organs, or be given a new celestial body.

“You will have to wait, the same way I did, until you give the smoke to someone else ... That is the rule” (104). Faciality is denied for it only leads back to the signifying regime of the despot.

The last component of the authoritarian-passional regime that we have left to discuss is “existence in reprieve, indefinite postponement” (a thousand plateaus 123). In pursuing the line of flight, the paranoid signifier, the scapegoat would normally be subject to “imperial death.” However, in the postsignifying regime, the line of flight is traveled by a passional subject who receives an “indefinite postponement.” In this way, betrayal serves to create a destiny of exodus.

To discover this component of The Teachings, we must turn to don Juan’s discussion of the enemies of the Man of Knowledge. The first three enemies—fear, clarity, and power—are concerned with the dangers of becoming, of proceeding along a line of flight. The final enemy, however, is the condition of this mode of becoming; it is the condition of the postsignifying regime: “Old age! This enemy is the cruelest of all, the one he won’t be able to defeat completely, but only fight away” (60). As it is elucidated, this enemy, properly “Death,” is the companion of the sorcerer throughout his life. Castaneda describes the relationship this way: “... death stands to your left. Death is an impartial judge who will speak truth to you and give you accurate



advice ... The moment you remember you must eventually die you are cut down to the right size" (121).

The most forceful illustration of Death's role as reprieve is Carlos's encounter with the crows of fate. During his third and fourth sessions with the "little smoke," Carlos is taught to become a crow. After his first flight as a crow, don Juan is unusually anxious and demands that Carlos tell everything that happened. Following Carlos's report, don Juan explains: "This indication places your emissaries at the end of the day. They will call you, and as they fly above your head, they will become silvery white; you will see them shining against the sky, and it will mean your time is up. It will mean you are going to die and become a crow yourself" (127).

Death is preordained; and, furthermore, it is inescapable: "My benefactor told me that one could shout them back to black if one does not want to die. But I know it can't be done ... After they have collected you they will reverse directions, and there will be four of them flying away." The prophecy of the crows is the illustration of shamanic "existence in reprieve" (127). Carlos knows that his death is already set; the doom of the line of flight has been established. However, it has been indefinitely postponed until the hour that his emissaries fly overhead.

As we have observed, Carlos's apprenticeship takes place in the postsignifying regime of signs: the line of flight has received a positive value; authority produces an exodus through betrayal; the pupil and the Master turn away from each other; and Death takes a position at the apprentice's left-hand, symbolizing the "indefinite postponement."

### **Rhythm/Refrain – Techniques of Non-Ordinary States**

What gave me the greatest relief, even more than recovering bodily sensations, which I had almost entirely failed to do, was to make my hand beat out a rhythm on the woodwork beside my bed (Michaux 151).

The explorer of "non-ordinary states" travels a path of peril: "We are all too familiar with dangers of the line of flight" (a thousand plateaus 250). In the epigraph, Henri Michaux, while under the influence of mescaline, discovers relief in rhythm. He creates "a calm and stable 'pace'" (312). Rhythm is "a communication of milieus, coordination between heterogeneous space-times... it ties together critical moments" (313). Rhythm as ritual, as chant, as a way of proceeding is the technology of the sorcerer:

“I am he who puts together,” says the medicine man to define his shamanistic function: “he who speaks, he who searches, says. I am he who looks for the spirit of the day, says. I search where there is fright and terror. I am he who fixes, he who cures the person that is sick. Herbal medicine. Remedy of the spirit. Remedy of the atmosphere of the day, says. I am he who resolves all, says. Truly you are man enough to resolve the truth. You are he who puts together and resolves. You are he who puts together the personality. You are he who speaks with the light of day. You are he who speaks with terror” (Munn 113).

Eliade’s shaman, Deleuze and Guattari’s sorcerer, Castaneda’s *brujo* are all masters of lines of flight, of all manner of proceedings and becomings. The most ancient of services that the shaman provides is the recovery of lost souls. In this project, the shaman must retrace the path of flight of the lost soul through “empathic imagination”; once found, it is called back to its owner and reintegrated.

In Henry Munn’s study of the Mazatec shamanic tradition, he describes the search for a lost soul. The Shaman explains: “Under the effect of the mushrooms, the lost spirit is whistled for through space for the spirit is alienated, but by means of the mushrooms one can call for it with a whistle”

(Munn 115). The whistling is as of the breath of the spirit, a whistling as of bird song: “The song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilizing, calm and stable, center in the heart of chaos” (a thousand plateaus 311). Like Carlos during the episode with the “little smoke,” the frightened spirit must be soothed and lulled with a rhythm, a song. This singing as of a bird, not only calls the spirit, but reintegrates it: “The role of the refrain has often been emphasized: it is territorial, a territorial assemblage. Bird songs: the bird sings to mark its territory” (a thousand plateaus 312).

Through whistling and song, the lost soul is called and reterritorialized to its owner. The mechanics of soul recovery and of the mushroom ritual in general, are rhythmic. In the Mazatec mushroom ritual, rhythm is emphasized through the use of the marker, “says”: “From the beginning, once what they have eaten has modified their consciousness, they begin to speak and at the end of each phrase they say *tzo* – ‘says’ in their language - like a rhythmic punctuation of the said. Says, says, says” (Munn 89). During the ritual ingestion of the holy mushroom, the Mazatec shaman coordinates the experience of all those present through rhythm and melody; the Shaman sing-says—chants. “Not following a logical order, but following alogical consistencies or compatibilities” the shaman territorializes the experiences of the communicants by producing a rhythm which ties together the “critical

moments” of each communicant into the refrain of the whole, of the group proceeding.

It is through a technology of rhythm and the refrain that the shaman enters and navigates ecstatic states. It is a tool for making the journey productive, for managing the potential perils of their lines of flight. In fact, it is in relation to such dangers that don Juan introduces the refrain as the technique of Carlos’s apprenticeship.

Early on in the apprenticeship, don Juan teaches Carlos that the enemies of the Man of Knowledge are fear, clarity, power, and old age (death). Confronted sequentially, Carlos’s initiation is primarily a quest to learn to defeat the first enemy—fear. As don Juan tells us, there are only two responses to fear: one either faces it, or one retreats (The Teachings 57-8). Confronted with the chaos of becoming, with the recognition of the possibility of the line of flight “turning into a line of abolition,” Carlos has two ways of managing his fear. The first method, which we have already discussed, is interpretation; it is the attempt to reconcile his experiences to the regime of significance—a retreat to rationality. The second option is to confront his fear and use the techniques of the sorcerer—refrain and rhythm—to master it.

Carlos is introduced and trained in the techniques of the sorcerer through several methods. The most immediate and obvious example of the

refrain in The Teachings is the ritualized preparation of the psychotropic substances. Superficially, the ritualized preparations seek to routinize the psychotropic experience; the mind is cleared, the will is solidified, and the apprentice makes sure his is on “the path with heart.”

### Preparation and Refrain

Of the three psychotropic substances in The Teachings, the preparation of datura is most painstaking,<sup>12</sup> but the ritual gathering of peyote is the most illuminating. When don Juan and Carlos go to gather Mescalito, they walk out at night through the desert. Carlos stoops to pick peyote when he sees it, but don Juan stops him:

‘Tomorrow we will start walking back,’ don Juan said without looking at me, and pointing to the valley. ‘We will work our way back and pick him as we cross the field. That is, we will pick him

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<sup>12</sup> For examples of the ritualistic preparation, consider the planting and cultivation of datura: “When you have buried the pot go back to your shoot and water it once more. Then take out your image, hold it between the fingers where the flesh wound is, and, standing on the spot where you have buried the glue, touch the shoot lightly with the sharp needle. Circle the shoot four times, stopping each time in the same spot to touch it” (The Teachings 53-54). Also consider the lengthy preparation of the psychotropic paste, the preparation of the lizards, and the divination of success or failure of the session (76-82).

only when he is in our way. *He* will find us and not the other way around. *He* will find us—if he wants to' (65).

In this ritual, the plant is endowed with qualities and is made expressive: peyote is Mescalito—a masculine protector and teacher. He will teach Carlos “if he wants to.” In Mescalito’s abode, the *brujo* obeys *his* laws: “There is territory when the rhythm has expressiveness. What defines the territory is the emergence of matters of expression (qualities)” (a thousand plateaus 315).

While the *brujo* initiates this contact, curiously the plant is endowed with its “intention.” As Carlos carries the bags of peyote buttons, he notices that they seem extraordinarily heavy:

Don Juan whispered to me that the bags were heavy because Mescalito wanted to return to the ground. He said it was the sadness of leaving his abode which made Mescalito heavy; my real chore was not to let the bags touch the ground, because if I did Mescalito would never allow me to take him again (The Teachings 72).

An important feature of the sorcerer’s use of refrain in preparation is that the qualities of the power plants (and the states they induce) include the negative or dangerous aspects of becoming. In this case, Mescalito is a teacher and guide, but he is also expressed as powerful and dangerous. To this end, the

ritual produces his expressiveness and territory (his abode) as the source of holy terror. It is to be entered and exited with reverence and silence.<sup>13</sup>

Mescalito must be properly removed and reterritorialized for the use of the sorcerer.

Such preparatory rituals are a highly complex means of manipulating the set and setting of the psychedelic assay. On one hand this “preparation” of Mescalito anticipates the value or positive expressiveness of the psychotropic experience while also constraining, managing, limiting the danger of the impending becoming. However, and perhaps more profoundly, this preparation configures the potential of experience around the problem (or disjunctive series) of two attractors—one positive, the other negative. The refrain communicates this spectrum and conditions the expression of the problem “Mescalito.”

Every psychotropic experience and/or Shamanic flight requires this same careful attention for “a mistake in speed, rhythm, or harmony would be catastrophic because it would bring back the forces of chaos, destroying both creator and creation” (a thousand plateaus 311). After his second experience

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<sup>13</sup> Throughout the peyote gathering expedition, there are number of details and procedures that must be observed. For example, Carlos is warned to observe the proper respect for Mescalito in his abode: “‘One more thing. Only I can pick him. You will carry the bag, or walk ahead of me—I don’t know yet. But tomorrow you will not point at him as you did today!’” (The Teachings 65).



with datura and the oracle lizards, Carlos asks don Juan what would happen if the lizard on his shoulder (the one who speaks, the singer of the refrain) would have died:

“If the lizard had died while she was on your shoulder, after you had begun the sorcery, you would have had to go ahead with it, and that would truly have been madness.”

“Why would it have been madness?”

“Because under such conditions nothing makes sense. You are alone without a guide, seeing terrifying, nonsensical things.”

...

“Do you know anyone who ever experienced that?”

“Yes. I did. Without the wisdom of the lizards I went mad” (The Teachings 117).

In the preparation for the datura session, the second lizard is expressed as the guide; it is territorialized to express the flight’s refrain—the means by which its critical moments will be tied together. If the lizard had died during the experience, the means of organizing chaos would be lost and the result would be madness—the line of flight would lead to destruction: “The milieus are open to chaos, which threatens them with exhaustion or intrusion... What

chaos and rhythm have in common is the in-between—between two milieus, rhythm-chaos or the chaosmos ... In this in-between, chaos becomes rhythm, not inexorably, but it has the chance to" (a thousand plateaus 313).

Thus, ritualistic preparation—and, especially don Juan's descriptions of what Carlos will experience during each session—serves two goals. On one hand it is a further means of controlling and achieving ascendancy over the pupil through the infallible prediction (or more properly) programming of the experience. On the other hand, the preprogramming of each session, the anticipation of the experience in an expressive way, is a necessity for organizing the experience to be productive. The continuing pedagogical aspect of the apprenticeship is the inculcation of ritual and refrain as a means of managing the psychotropic or ecstatic experience.

### Mescalito and Refrain

During the peyote gathering expedition, in between their trek into the desert and the walk back, Carlos takes peyote for a second time. As he is taken by Mescalito's influence, don Juan cryptically remarks, "The twilight is the crack between the worlds" (The Teachings 66). Symbolically and by don Juan's suggestion, Carlos is about to enter the chaosmos, the in-between. Just

before this session, don Juan provided a very particular preparation—a most unique refrain:

“Did your benefactor teach you all this about Mescalito?”

“No! Nobody has taught me about him. It was the protector himself who was my teacher.”

“How does he teach, then?”

...

“Don’t ask *me!*” He smiled maliciously. “Ask him. The next time you see him, ask him everything you want to know”

(65).

Carlos has been prepared to experience Mescalito as expressive of how *he* should be experienced: this is to be a flight of visionary instruction. Carlos will be ‘taught’ how to navigate the “crack between the worlds.” Furthermore, he will receive visionary instruction on the techniques of the sorcerer from Mescalito, himself.

As he goes under the influence of the peyote, Carlos hears “a buzzing inside my ears. The sound became louder by degrees until it was like a vibration caused by an enormous bull-roarer.” Thus, Carlos experiences the intrusion of chaos and is afraid: “The violence and intensity of the noise terrified me. I was shaking so much that I could hardly remain standing” (67).

Panicked, Carlos searches for and finds don Juan. He turns to his Master for stabilization, expecting that don Juan will provide a rhythm to organize the experience.

At first, he finds don Juan's speech unintelligible; but, when Carlos is left frozen by the "unbearable fear," don Juan provides a rhythmic order: "Get up! Move around! Get up!" (68). Temporarily, "chaos becomes rhythm" and the horrible sound stops. Sufficiently territorialized to become aware of the qualities of his experience, Carlos notices that a rhythm is organizing his vision: "Then it would get dark; then it would clear again. Soon I realized that the brightness corresponded to my heart's diastole, and the darkness to its systole. The world changed from bright to dark to bright again with every beat of my heart."

Already the self-referential refrain has begun to establish itself. Rhythm territorializes the chaosmos, makes it expressive. However, chaos "threatens... intrusion." Again, Carlos hears the roar of chaos. Yet, he has learned the lesson of the first part of the vision. He listens carefully and becomes aware of a peculiar quality to the fearful sound: "Listening to it as carefully as I could, I was able to detect a definite melody ... I focused all my attention on the melody, and again noticed that the systole and diastole of my heart coincided with the sound of the bass drum, and with pattern of the music" (69).

The bull-roarer is Mescalito himself; now that Carlos has been able to detect the melody and experience the expressiveness of Mescalito, he is ready to enter Mescalito's territory: "The refrain is rhythm and melody that have been territorialized because they have become expressive—and have become expressive because they are territorializing" (Deleuze and Guattari, a thousand plateaus 317). Carlos is transported across a body of water to a new land, Mescalito's territory. The lesson of the vision learned, Carlos sees Mescalito who speaks to him with music, "as a melody of voices" (70).

Thus far, the apprentice has listened to the refrain of the flight and learned its lessons. However, he makes one error. Given his chance to "ask him everything you want to know," Carlos talks about his life and weeps. Mescalito gives him a vision, a final lesson, and the flight is over. The next day Carlos asks don Juan about the vision and his error becomes apparent: "I asked him what the lesson was and what it had meant. He said it would be impossible to answer that question because I had been too afraid to know exactly what I asked Mescalito" (73). Carlos repeats this error in his first experience with datura.<sup>14</sup> The sorcerer needs to remember and attend to the

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<sup>14</sup> The divination and use of the oracle lizards depends on the communicant providing a clear question. Don Juan explains why Carlos's vision is muddled: "The lizards are never wrong; they take every thought as a question. The lizard came back and told you things about H. no one will ever be able to understand, because not even you know what your thoughts were" (The Teachings 84).

question (problematic) that provides the refrain for the vision; without it, the experience is unintelligible and cannot be adequately expressed.

The technique of ecstasy, the means for achieving mastery of the shamanic flight, is the refrain. Through rhythm, the chaosmos (the scene of becoming to which the line of flight leads) is made expressive. Without these tools of producing, of connecting the critical moments of “alogical consistencies or compatibilities,” the sorcerer would be at the mercy of the chaos accompanying the dissolution of consciousness: we could find ourselves completely deterritorialized, racing down the furrows of an indefinitely extended line of flight.

### The Final Test

Near the end of The Teachings’ account, Carlos complains of experiencing “brief, shallow states of non-ordinary reality” (131). Don Juan diagnoses Carlos as suffering from a loss of soul. The proof of this bewitchment is that “the noise of flying airplanes could carry me away.” Deterritorialized, becoming schizophrenic, Carlos finds himself vulnerable to the seductions and potential reterritorializations of the any refrain, melody, or rhythm that draws near. Apparently, Carlos’s two techniques of managing

fear and territorializing his spirit have proven inadequate to the stress of his training. As don Juan might put it, Carlos will only reach clarity through a confrontation with the first enemy of man: fear.

In the face of this fear, Carlos finds himself no longer able to retreat through rationalization (managing fear). The “non-ordinary” experiences of his training have proven irreconcilable his anthropologists’ rationality and its regime of significance. However, he also proven unable to completely give himself over to the techniques of sorcery; he continues to resist his training. Clearly, Carlos is at a crossroads and crisis looms on the horizon. As don Juan explains, his soul has been stolen and is held in limbo in the “crack between worlds ... the world of the *diablos* and the world of living men” (137).

The stage has been set for the final test of The Teachings. As we have maintained all along, Carlos’s “only choice will be between a goat’s ass and the face of the God, between sorcerers and priests.” In this ultimate contest with the first enemy of the Man of Knowledge, Carlos must either retreat from his fear of the chaosmos or face it directly and employ the technology of the sorcerer to overcome it.

Don Juan prepares Carlos this way. He will leave to discover who has taken his soul. While he is gone, Carlos must maintain a “fighting form” while remaining “on [his] beneficial spot” (132). Finally, he is instructed the last

resort to be taken if he is attacked. He is to hurl an object with a war cry produced by “holding back one’s natural fear and haste until one was absolutely filled with power, and then the yell would burst out with direction and power” (133). This is a unique form of the territorializing song: “if a robber ‘improperly wishes to occupy a spot which doesn’t belong to it, the true owner sings and sings so well that the predator goes away’” (a thousand plateaus 317). The war cry is the most aggressive type of “bird song” the sorcerer has at his or her disposal. Don Juan’s last bit of advice is that Carlos sings the songs of Mescalito if he becomes “too frightened.”

With these instructions, don Juan leaves Carlos to his test. Like a good apprentice, Carlos occupies his power spot and waits. Although hastily given, don Juan’s instructions follow the form and logic of all the techniques of sorcery he has taught Carlos. The test begins like this:

Four hours later I heard don Juan walking around the house. I thought he might have left through the back to urinate in the bushes. Then he called me loudly.

“Hey boy! Hey boy! I need you here,” he said.

I nearly got up to go to him. It was his voice, but not his tone, or his usual words (The Teachings 133).



In this first encounter with the counterfeit don Juan, Carlos proves able to distinguish the qualities of his Master as opposed to the signs that mark him — “his voice, but not his tone.” Carlos notes further incongruities: “He stumbled on the wood pile as if he did not know it was there”; “He seemed heavier than usual”; he also fails to sit in his spot; etc. The counterfeit don Juan approaches Carlos and he adopts the fighting technique: “I began beating my calf and thigh, and dancing fast” (134). The intruder, the soul robber, retreats.

Over the course of the night, the counterfeit don Juan reappears twice. During the final encounter, Carlos hurls a rock with his war cry: “The figure in front wobbled and shrieked and staggered to the side of the house and into the bushes again” (136). Finally, the ‘authentic’ don Juan appears. Carlos passed his test. He faced his enemy and defeated “her” using the technology of the sorcerer (refrain and rhythm; expressive territorialization).

Although the account of The Teachings ends with Carlos claiming that he has “succumbed the first enemy of a man of knowledge,” he has passed the test, and we might suspect that he will return to his training (140). Castaneda certainly proved willing to meet such expectations. With each additional publication, the academic and public willingness to accept don Juan’s authenticity diminished; yet, the best way to read Castaneda has never been as anthropological fact: “Reading these books one would do well to keep in mind

the formula with which traditional Sudanese story-telling begins: 'I'm going to tell a story,' the narrator proclaims. 'Right!' the audience rejoins. 'It's a lie,' he warns. 'Right!' comes the reply. 'But not everything in it is false,' he asserts. 'Right!' echo the listeners" (Reno 256).

Reading Castaneda as something other than fraudulent anthropology means suspending the impulse to verification, disrupting the regime of signification. Positively, it means traveling the choasmotic middle ground of the "as if true," "as if false." In end, the choice we began with returns, the choice "between sorcerers and priests." Yet, this repetition suggests a new resonance. Castaneda's text proffers an invitation, a challenge to the reader; it proposes an apprenticeship. Whether or not the reader will prove able to fly, curiously, just might depend on the doubt of Carlos.

### **The Castaneda Series**

The Carlos of Castaneda's work seems to be the embodiment of old personal habits and collective tendencies, such as intellectualization, dependence upon reason, and fear of the

unconscious. Carlos is the Western Everyman typifying our most familiar conscious routines (Williams 12).

There is something improbably rigid about Carlos. Critics have variously described his panicked rationalism as fictional device, uncanny verisimilitude, or even, as emblematic of “frozen bourgeois reality.”<sup>15</sup> Throughout the course of his increasingly extravagant and dramatic journey and even though he continues to demonstrate remarkable aptitude, Carlos’s internal debate rages. He finds his experiences undeniable, yet remains somehow unable to accept them; he resists, rationalizes, doubts. Before long, everyone involved becomes weary of this complex. Don Juan, Deleuze and Guattari, the faithful reader, even Carlos himself reach a level of exasperation and cry, “Stop! You’re making me tired! Experiment, don’t signify and interpret!”

We might say that the aim of this rationalist intransigence is to goad all parties involved into making a great leap. Leading away from Carlos’s protestations, his inadequacy, and his doubts, there emerges a passionate regime of readership. In it, the “line [of flight] receives a positive sign, as

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<sup>15</sup> See David Silverman, Reading Castaneda: a Prologue to the Social Sciences. Silverman’s book offers a variety of idiosyncratic formulations, several of which are delightfully critiqued in Minogue’s essay, “The Guru” (20).

though it were effectively occupied and followed by a people who find in it their reason for being or destiny" (a thousand plateaus 121). Of course, this may be asking a bit much from a modest literary device. Yet, what the intrusion of rational, everyman Carlos actually presents is the repetition of the initial choice "between sorcerers and priests." This choice is the text's continually renewed problem, a refrain that echoes, collects, and builds from the moment of its first appearance.

Across each of its occasions, that is, for each ecstatic/psychotropic event in the series expressing this problem, there emerges a rhythm of instruction and preparation culminating in phantasmic flight. However, just as importantly, there is a debriefing with don Juan and period of reflection in which Carlos tries to translate his experience into the context of "consensus reality." At the level of the narrative/series, the repetitive and feeble exasperation of these attempts form the basis of a refrain, a territorialization, that collects and gathers together the differences of each ecstatic assay, each phantasmic-journey/event. It operates as a transducer allowing the "transmission of an impulse of virtuality from one actualization to another and across them all" (Massumi 42). Ideally, this "force of potential" is experienced by the reader as resonance, intensity, affect. As a building "something," a surplus that exceeds Carlos's rationalizations.

The sheer clumsiness and redundancy of Carlos's rational objections, his attempts to determine a chain of signification operate as an annoyance repeatedly cutting into the phantasmic series of the teachings. In fact, the pseudo-theoretical epilogue to the text operates as final priestly insult enclosing the teachings of the sorcerer. Is it any surprise that this motif subtly prejudices the reader in don Juan's favor? By betraying Carlos the anthropologist, the reader joins the line of flight and completes the circuit of betrayal that consecrates an apprenticeship with Castaneda. It is on this level that the text actually becomes a pedagogy, that it *does* a teaching.

Of course, this second apprenticeship carries its own indefinite reprieve. Will Carlos continue his training? Will Castaneda's readers continue theirs? Who will ultimately prevail between the UCLA professors and don Juan? This is why there must be another book after The Teachings, another, and another. It is the continual displacement and repetition of this choice that constitutes Castaneda's ecstatic pedagogy. Ultimately, Castaneda's readers become his apprentices when they claim the choice between sorcerers and priests as their own.

## CONCLUSION



**Figure 7: CONCLUSION**

Complete thoughts move through at least two complementary attractors. We might consider the early Greek rhetorical form of the *dissoi logoi* which suggests that in any case there are at least two arguable sides. We are perhaps more familiar with the common criticism of the Sophists: they claim to teach one how to make the weaker case appear the stronger.<sup>1</sup> We might say that in any case complementary attractors may be sought, but as the serial expressions of thought unfolds, they necessarily reveal themselves as modulating bifurcations in each of its instances. A weakness in one case always responds to a strength of the other, but the opposite must also then be true: each one's strength reflects back to the weakness in the other.

Ultimately, we must recognize in this paradoxical, reciprocal ability the power of outside thought; all thought is real, but abstract: it cuts into life from a perspective wholly other than a perceived Euclidean universe of the material and things. Each time we grasp a thought, we do so dually, thinking a thought and its opposite to it think at all. However, we also only ever think through

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<sup>1</sup> "Now, as the story goes, Corax launched a suit against Tisias in order to recover unpaid fees. Tisias maintained that if he lost the case he should not have to pay since this would be evidence of the inadequacy of Corax's teaching. Tisias, then, sought to be rewarded for the weakness of his position, even though this weakness could obviously become a strength. Corax argued on the contrary that even if Tisias won he should be obliged to pay since this would be evidence of his good teaching: 'the judge is reported to have dismissed the case with the proverbial remark: a bad egg from a bad crow (*korax*)' (Genosko 76).

the serial expression of partial events in our actual experience of thinking.

Thought cuts into the flow of time, each time, in exactly the same way, it emerges from recurrent bifurcations of chance and its immanent expression is affirmed as destiny: the finally fatal chance.<sup>2</sup>

An implacable patience with respect to the process of thought makes the success of an adequate product assured. Insofar as the product is merely the retroactive consumption of the process (its resolution and reflection) it necessarily entails the problematics and productivities of the constellation of the forces and powers of its assembled flows. The principle of selection is the eternal return of the process as product and the consumption of the product as the renewal of the process once again; it is found in the necessary filtering or leaving behind of dead ends, detritus, and reactive tangents in the process of synthesis across new thresholds and frames of experience: a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing. Curiously, Nietzsche would place the emphasis on the latter aspect of the previous statement: forgetting is the higher power of becoming otherwise—it allows us to leave behind that which would return as the same. It is a necessity for cultivating the capacity to become otherwise in thought and in life.

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<sup>2</sup> “We must conceive of an indefinite, straight line that (far from bearing events as a string supports its knots) cuts and recuts into each moment so many times that each event arises as both incorporeal and indefinitely multiple” (“Theatrum Philosophicum” 178).



### **Becoming otherwise; a serial narrative of impossible tasks**

Narrative is a principle of exclusion as much as it is a principle of inclusion. One on hand, it is a provisional limitation of the conceptual bifurcations of the materials under examination: it assembles as its surface a singular line of flight through the multiplicity of possible senses of its assay. On the other hand, insofar as it provides the surface or occasion for the forces it assembles, it becomes a potential departure point for further explorations that cut into its flows and seek new transversal connections. Seriality, or the mere repetition of the effect of cutting into the flow of thought by providing the gap/connection between each word, thought, phrase, or concept and the next is the procedure by which it produces its effects.

Any conclusion of the present dissertation must admit that it seeks to constrain to a single arc what is a rather over-determined affair: it produces a singular series to re-present a host of other series. However, as we have seen again and again, constraint is the necessary origin of any attempt to produce new possibilities for living and thought. In our analysis of Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals, constraint appears as the disparity or dissension between habitual states of affairs and the encounter with an intolerable difference as

effect—it inaugurates an impossible task of becoming otherwise. More accurately, constraint is the retroactive, reactive experience by which we register and circumscribe the dislocation of the interruption of the unconscious continuity of habitual rhythms of life. In Nietzsche's analysis, consciousness is the surface effect or symptom produced by separating a force from what it can do. When a force is separated from what it can do, it turns against itself building up a surplus intensity of sufficient strength that it can create new way or route of exercising itself.

Like a river blocked by a fallen tree, force tends to seek its way forward in two directions at once (both of which bifurcate as well): the river first builds up against the blockage, flowing both into the tree but also returns as a backward flow from the tree (the force folds against itself); however, as the surplus of current builds (intensity), it inevitably begins to disperse itself in lateral movements perpendicular to the tree (force folds again, but along a new axis)—the river flows against itself, but then eventually spreads around the tree in both directions at once. The river arrives at a new course by dividing itself around the obstacle. This example suggests that creativity is the simple matter of the patient application or repetition of force against a sufficiently imposing obstacle or counter force—it becomes otherwise only by first becoming incapable of becoming the same.

To schematize—becoming otherwise arrives as a set of disjunctive series coordinated or organized by a singular problem. However, this problem is comprised by an over-determined set of tertiary relations of force and only ever emerges through the serial repetition and actualization of the differentials of these forces; the solution in which we recognize the problem is necessarily comprised of relations of quantities and qualities of force. How wide or large is the river in relation to the tree? How fast is it flowing? What is the perpendicular slope of the ground? Will it tend to escape to the left or the right? These are factors will tend to dictate the manner in which the river overcomes the tree. Does it split more or less equally around the tree and return to its normal course? Does it primarily flow to one side or the other? Does it divide into two new courses that never recombine? All these factors are the unique combination of chance that actively gives rise to the “solution” of the “problem.”

Each stage in a task of becoming otherwise is comprised of the relations of these two movements: first, a becoming reactive in which force is folded against itself through which the dilemma for change is identified; second, a becoming active of force in which a solution is sought by postulating the dilemma in a new way and along a new axis of confrontation. Of course, these dual aspects of each stage or intensive feature of the series are mutually

presupposing. Movement, as such, occurs between each intensive feature. Furthermore, the becoming active of one feature of the series becomes the becoming reactive of the next. Nietzsche's criticism of the dialectic is that it fails to account for the becoming active of processes of life in favor of the false stability of reading across the series on the basis of the repetition of the becoming reactive movements by which the dilemma reoccurs. Thus, the diagnostic Nietzsche offers in the Genealogy of Morals, critiques the version of a serial process in which at each stage of becoming the limitation of force, rather than its creative transformation, is posited as the origin of the value it produces.

Ultimately, Nietzsche argues that reactive processes lead themselves to their own overcoming. The negative nihilism of *ressentiment* passes over into the reactive nihilism of *bad conscience* which in turn passes over into the passive nihilism of the *ascetic ideal*, leading finally into the line of abolition which is the will to nihilism itself. However, it is at this point that it discovers the principle of intelligibility that it heretofore denied itself: the will to power versus the will to nihilism. At each stage in the process, the sterility of the law which would recover itself on the basis of reactive values must necessarily pass into a new development of the series in order to move at all. In final stage of the will to nihilism, reactive values themselves are given up and the fatal form of the

typological choice presents itself; the reactive forces which depreciate life as a means of stabilizing representation eventually destroy even their own foundation and discover the necessity of claiming life as the price of claiming death:

*Reactive forces break their alliance with the will to nothingness, the will to nothingness, in turn, break its alliance with reactive forces. It inspires in man a new inclination: for destroying himself actively ... Active destruction means: the point, the moment of transmutation in the will to nothingness. Destruction becomes active at the moment when, with the alliance between reactive forces and the will to nothingness broken, the will to nothingness is converted and crosses over to the side of affirmation, it is related to a power of affirming which destroys the reactive forces themselves (Deleuze, Nietzsche 174).*

Reactive forces seek to secure a stable territory by betraying at each turn the open ended task of producing new possibilities for life in favor of the provisional security of negative values; however, this line of flight eventually betrays even itself. In Nietzsche's typological analysis, reactive forces proceed by placing life in the service the *Thanatos* and the death drive, yet eventually arrive at the necessity of reversing this perspective and affirming the

destructive and antagonistic aspects of living as the means of achieving the power of the affirming life.

### **Becoming otherwise; the dangers of lines of flight**

According to Nietzsche's Zarathustra and Castaneda's Don Juan, there are three or even four dangers: first, Fear, then Clarity, then Power, and finally the great Disgust, the longing to kill and die, the Passion for abolition (Deleuze and Guattari, a thousand plateaus 227).

In A Thousand Plateaus, Deleuze and Guattari outline a schema for reconceptualizing the dangers of becoming that we have previously identified as the dual obligations of truth in the form of the rule of law and right to desire: fear, clarity, power, and disgust. Whereas Nietzsche diagnoses a typological distinction between forces of affirmation (active) and forces of depreciation (reactive), the obligation to truth produces a displacement of these categories onto a metaphysical plane of representation. In the context of the necessity of becoming otherwise, the obligation to truth refuses the principle of intelligibility by which we recognize the constraint of intolerable difference as

an opportunity for the transformation of capacities—a becoming reactive leading to a becoming active. Instead, the obligation to truth produces a double negation of the circumstance of change which forecloses any positivity of action. However, as we discussed in the previous section, even the reactive forces themselves proceed across a series of thresholds by in which the bifurcations of their series continually modulate in order to become otherwise.

Fear – *ressentiment* – health/life

Fear is the first danger—the line which seeks to escape the line of flight as such by seeking the provisional stability of binary, molar definition. The paranoid response of fear refuses to recognize the necessity of change as anything other than as a cutting into desiring production as a prohibitional force of an outside power. As an analog to *ressentiment*, the first enemy of becoming is the double negation of change through reference to the prohibition of the habitual in the form of the situation and the positing of a desire that seeks to negate its necessity. It is in this sense that desire is posited as lack gives rise to the phantasmic presence of the dialectic sign. The resentful subject blames the situation of change by positing its un-necessity; it represents to itself the image of a situation in which it would not have had to become

otherwise at all. It rebukes the actual in favor of a negative ideal which protests simultaneously against the necessity of change and the impossibility of returning to a “same.” Fear grips the situation as a matter of the possible fight for an unknown future health which cannot remain the same and as the possibility of a retreat which preserves past on the basis of reterritorializing it as the same.

In the second chapter, “The Right to Life,” disability studies emerges as a form of collective dissent against the disparities of health produced by technologies of normalization. The dissent of the disabled individual has two primary dimensions: first, it is a protest against the form of power/knowledge that produces them as abject identities and as the limits of the spectrums of vitality and health it administers; secondly, it is a claim to a right to life that biopower would seem to both promise and withhold—the production of new capacities for health. Thus, the disabled individual is necessarily oriented to seek relief from the indignities of social disenfranchisement and paternalist interventions, while simultaneously relying on the institutional mechanisms through which these effects are produced as a means of seeking new norms of living.

As sickness cuts into the flow of health as an interruption which produces the active overcoming of the development of new norms of health;



the normalization apparatus of biopower cuts into the socius, indentifying individuals along differentials of health—marking out sites of quarantine and intervention. However, the power/knowledge apparatus produces these effects by the positive application of techniques for the production of new capacities. Ultimately, the dilemma of health as normativity—health is the ability to tolerate change and the capacity to establish new norms of living—is echoed or recapitulated as the level of the social.

Traditionally, the critical project of the movement sought to reform institutions, challenge social attitudes, and influence governmental policy making; however, it became increasingly clear that subjectivity and modes of self-knowledge were increasingly at stake in the contestation of power. Ultimately, the problem for disability studies is framed as a the continued necessity of institutional critique (contestation of power effects) coupled with a new emphasis on seeking new modes of self-understanding and development through forms of the personal and the literary (new meaning effects).

Whereas disabilities studies originally sought a path in between the binary confrontations of the protesting individual and the prohibitive interventions of monolithic power, it has now become clear that the positive and increasingly molecular techniques of power which produce the subject are the new sites of our engagements with a now multiple power. Such a

recognition grants a new perspective on the dilemma of the disabled individual; one in which, the production of capacities and of health must take place in the everyday ways and everyday places through which power narrows our configurations of choice (fight or flight) into impossible necessities for action.

Clarity—*bad conscience*—rhetoric/possibility

Clarity is the second danger—the line which escapes molar binaries by becoming molecular in the proliferation of possibilities that emerge through the interiorization of the situation of change. In Nietzschean parlance, it is the folding of the force of the first movement (negative nihilism) back on itself to inaugurate a second lateral, capillary, contagion of interiorized escape (reactive nihilism). *Ressentiment* and molar development blame the accident of fate by negating its actuality in favor of a representation which retroactively posits the fiction of past that cannot become the future as the same. *Bad conscience* transforms the problem of change into the failure of habit (suffering) and the betrayal of its production of difference (constraint). Reactive nihilism seeks to make the weaker force of illness the stronger by folding it against itself to produce interiority and escape around the binary prohibitions of the molar

negative. Clarity represents the apparent freedom of movement supplied by the multiplication choice into diverging internal flows. However, the molecular movement of clarity remains open to threat of micro-reactivities—re-entrenchments of the prohibitions of law as the disciplines of the self and the multiplication and perversion of molar desire into a profusion of forms of privatized desire.

In the third chapter, “Equipment for Living,” the encounter with becoming otherwise takes the form of seeking a way out of maladaptive orientations. Echoing Isocrates, Kenneth Burke argues that the deliberative process of truth is actually an *agon* of competing rhetorical appeals whose ethical value can only be adjudicated on the basis of the effects they would produce for the future. Building on pragmatist critiques of the metaphysics of truth, Burke argues that the orientations we hold within the resources of language and our habits of thought configure our possibilities for action. Further, following William James, we find that new truths are ratified on the dual basis of the novel and useful possibilities for action they provide but also on the basis of their correspondence and reinforcement of the ways in which we already experience the world. Thus, orientations and interpretive schemes tend to be self-reinforcing even in the face of changes in circumstance that lead them to become maladaptive.

In seeking a way out of the self-reinforcing structures of language and the processes of socialization by which they are reproduced, Burke argues the multiplication of perspectives for action should be the goal of rhetorical interventions. Taking Isocrates argument a step further, Burke argues that the primary value offered by artists of discourse and genres like literature is that they are capable of producing perspective by incongruity; they seek effects that escape the means of interpretive or social formulization. The production of novel and unintended effects is a primary means of seeking new possibilities for living and escaping the maladaptive orientations we necessarily encounter. Ultimately, we might say that the choice between the gridlock of habitual orientations and the counter-gridlock of novel effects commits us to produce effects which cannot on the adjudicated on the basis of the future but rather to seek to configure the possibilities through which it might yet arrive.

Power—*ascetic ideal*—genealogy/ethics

Power is the third danger— crossing the molar and molecular, “it stretches from the rigid segments with their overcoding and resonance to the fine segmentations with their diffusion and interactions, and back again” (a thousand plateaus 229). It creates a market of forces from which it arrogates to

itself the surplus of the differential connections it facilitates. In terms of the *ascetic ideal*, it is the submission to a higher power or imperative through becoming its interpreter and guide; the passive acceptance of the nihilistic values produced through the modalities of *ressentiment* and *bad conscience*. As it relates to mode by which we are constituted as subjects this obligation to truth is constitutive of us as “moral subjects of our own actions” (Foucault, “What is Enlightenment” 56). The surplus of power produced through the “obedience contract” is the excess of force that accrues to the sign, a surplus that further precipitates new signs and meanings. Thus, the libidinal economy of the individual and of society is wrapped up in assemblages of forces and signs that constitute desire and produce excess as their means of expansion/intensification/repetition.

Power coordinates the totalizations of exemplary signs along the binary distributions of molarity, and molecular hermeneutics of the sign which pursue an absolute process of deciphering desire. In the Kantian formula for the *ascetic ideal*, we become subjects of the knowledge developed about us (through science) and obligated to discover the truth of our intentions in order to submit them to the rule of reason. However, contemporary forms of power increasingly also operate at the level of the subindividual as a microphysics of

power—the dual forms of a becoming obsessed with control or becoming mad with desire.

In the fourth chapter, “Becoming ‘what one is,’” the problem of becoming otherwise is resituated in the context of three distinct movements: Foucaultian, Nietzschean, and Deleuzian/Guattarian. First, following Foucault, I argue that if contemporary forms of power exercise the self through the production of its capacities, genealogy is a necessary tool for becoming otherwise insofar as it provides a way out of the form of an ethical subject that produces itself by means of an obligation to truth. If the Western tradition has been indifferent to pleasure, obliged us to renounce acts of pleasure in favor of deciphering our desire through first religious and later scientific means, then perhaps technologies of the self could regain their affirmativity by focusing on acts and pleasure, by no longer renouncing the self in favor of some higher power, but rather developing the self on the basis of an aesthetics of creativity.

Second, following Nietzsche, if our task is to seek a mode of self-development that eschews dependence on a higher power (truth and the lie of the ideal), then we must affirm the contingent expressions of chance which constitute our lives as a necessity for becoming otherwise. Nietzsche argues that any narrow sense of a “self,” that seeks a stable identity to bind time in a self-narrative is acting out a reactive force that attempts to seize and freeze the

relations of forces of which it is the nexus. Thus, health is an affectivity or responsiveness to change, transformation, and overcoming. Becoming ‘what one is,’ does not mean to discover truth as a metaphysical property of our “self,” nor is it to discover one’s self in the *telos* or mechanism of an ideal law or material mechanism—to “become what one is” requires no longer seeking the self or its health as a predicate, but to affirm them as verbs.

Finally, following Deleuze and Guattari, if we must seek to become otherwise in order to secure a continually renewing health, then we must also refuse both the false security of submitting to the rule of law (Oedipus-lack) and the false freedom of exercising unrepressed desire (Mother-right). Both modes of becoming are ones in which we are made hostages to history and unconsciously seek the repetition of the same. Ultimately, the only true mode of health posits becoming as a continually renewed problem of movement, rather than the search for a stable platform for identity, right, rule, or desire. It requires, above all, an ethics of transformation; the only ground provided for ethics is one that must continually be reborn otherwise: the reoccurrence of the body and the repetition of its difference. As genealogy, becoming otherwise requires the patient examination of the forces of the past that seek to colonize the future in order to discover new modes of ethical subjectivity for the present.

Disgust—*line of flight* (fatal choice)—will to power/will to nihilism

Disgust is the fourth danger—"the line of flight crossing the wall, getting out of the black holes, but instead of connecting to other lines and each time augmenting its valence, *turning to destruction, abolition pure and simple, the passion of abolition*" (a thousand plateaus 229). The final stage of becoming otherwise is the direct confrontation with the principle of intelligibility for the choice between reactive forces and affirmative forces of life. Through the stages of *ressentiment*, *bad conscience*, and the *ascetic ideal*, force continually folded back on itself to introduce a new complexity of focus, while simultaneously recapitulating the work of the negative and the illusory reproduction of the same. However, in Nietzsche's final analysis the passive nihilism (*ascetic ideal*) by which we submit to a higher power and its form of an obligation to truth, may eventually come to betray the will to nihilism by which it manifests its fate.

This fourth line of flight carries with it the greatest danger that the abolition of the past and the destruction of organizing forces does not end. This dilemma echoes the dream of the last man and the ugliest despair of all—if there is no longer an ideal to be pursued or a process which secures the



inevitability of success, in its place we may choose to cultivate signs of failure and processes of deracination as higher values in and of themselves (*will to nihilism*). In place of the actual experience of becoming otherwise and the confrontation of its irreducible alterity, the last man overwrites each experience by reference to regimes of signification in order to ensure that each time it means the same thing and in the same way—refusing to connect to anything but the repetition of failure.

Faced with the impossible task of becoming otherwise there are two choices: the fight to remain the same or the flight to a new version of health, rhetoric, ethics, thought. The becoming active of force destroys the reactive foundations of old habits and orientations by reappropriating its materials, diagnosing its maladaptions, seeking its positive expression as a transitive flight to the future (*will to power*). When the higher values of a rule of law or right to desire are thrown off, the line of flight becomes an ecstatic practice—the necessity of becoming otherwise as the affirmation of an impossible task.

In chapter 1, “Gymnastics of the Soul,” we begin with the Isocratean premise that thought, speech, writing are best understood as bridges between the already said of language and the emerging circumstances that are the occasions for their production. Whether in the guise of an aspiration to certain knowledge or through the refinement and application of a systemic method,

Isocrates explicitly and routinely denies the possibility of any trans-historical or transcendental truth. Critiquing the sterility of law, Isocrates argues impossible task of creating something new necessarily fails if it seeks to screen out the particulars of the unique rhetorical situation at hand. A rhetoric of true knowledge seeks to preempt the outcome of its endeavor by appealing to an illusory ground of judgment by which the positivity of its effects might be foreordained—a prescience of rhetorical intention. A rhetoric of systemic method seeks to guarantee the positivity of its effects through the truth of its process—a totalization of possible effects.

Both models eschew the necessarily contingent process of conjecture and the evaluation of its unique effects, in favor of repeating the foundationalisms of the valuable in itself or the valuable for all. Instead of a correspondence with a pre-established truth or framework of value, Isocrates posits an effectiveness of the appropriate response which critiques and reformulates the conditions of particular circumstance in order to create new possibilities for the future. The reoccurrence of the body as the non-ground of the resources of language which cannot be applied as a law or rule and the repetition of its difference as the inevitability of its unknowable effects.

The fifth chapter, “Ecstatic Practice,” explores Carlos Castaneda’s The Teaching of don Juan as a pedagogy of ecstatic practices which eschew regimes

of signification and the obligation to truth: Castaneda's novel dramatizes the dilemma of the individual who encounters the impossible task of becoming otherwise without recourse to a law which may be followed or a desire that may be trusted. When faced with the betrayal of both kinds of higher powers (rule of law and right to desire), there is no longer any meaning effect or rational frame sufficient for rendering the experience intelligible.

The result is an ecstatic experience of learning that can only be managed through the serial repetition of its exposure to an irreducible unknown and the affirmed anticipation of emergent qualities of its expression across the chance encounters that the series precipitates. Rather than signs of intelligibility, the ecstatic experience coordinates consistencies across disparate milieus simultaneously producing expressive refrains and territorializing features; its principle of expressivity is the dilemma of the impossible choice between active and reactive forces and becomings—the affirmation of life as the *will to power* or the depreciation and exhaustion of life as the *will to nihilism*.

The Teachings fails before the question: what does it mean? What it *does* is to demand a different kind of reading—to be read as a recipe. Castaneda's text denies the regime of signification (by eliding the question of its own authenticity), casting its readers out along a line of flight of passional apprenticeship. Through the persona of "Carlos," Castaneda models the

training of apprenticeship, the difficult process of giving up interpretation, authenticity, and rational explanation in his engagement with the instruction of don Juan and learns to manage the terrors of traveling the sorcerer's lines of flight. Furthermore, in Castaneda's work these lines of flight are explicitly situated as therapeutic techniques or experiments that seek to break down or break through the machinery of Western rationality and humanism.

Thus, the reader is confronted by the choice between interpretive schemes that seek to repeat life on the basis of the same and the visions of a medicine man of literature who seeks to provide new possibilities for living: we are offered a choice "between sorcerers and priests." This choice is the text's continually renewed problem, a refrain that echoes, collects, and builds from the moment of its first appearance. It escapes the regime of significance as a an excessive sign whose value cannot be represented but must be experienced as a singular potential for becoming 'what one is.' Becoming otherwise, like any form of true learning, living, or health, offers no guarantees; in it we find chance affirmed as necessity: the destiny of those who would become otherwise.

Table 2: SEVERAL PLANES OF IMMANENCE

<b>Becoming Otherwise</b>	<b>Life/ Health</b>	<b>Literature/ Possibility</b>	<b>Genealogy/ Ethics</b>	<b>Flight/ Thought</b>
<b>Ethical Subjectivity</b> <sup>3</sup>	<i>Ethical substance</i> in what do we recognize the truth of ourselves	<i>Asceticism</i> by what means do we change ourselves	<i>Mode of subjectivation</i> how do we recognize our obligations	<i>Telos</i> kind of being to which we aspire
<b>Dangers of Becoming</b> <sup>4</sup>	<i>Fear</i> Molar, double bind	<i>Clarity</i> Molecular, viral	<i>Power</i> Machinic coordination of molar and molecular	<i>Death</i> Disgust, passion for abolition
<b>Genealogy of Morals</b> <sup>5</sup>	<i>ressentiment</i> projection/reversal negative nihilism	<i>bad conscience</i> turning back/changing direction reactive nihilism	<i>ascetic ideal</i> make bearable/will to nothingness passive nihilism	<i>Will to Power / Will to Nihilism</i>
<b>Technologies of Power</b> <sup>6</sup>	<i>Sovereign</i>	<i>Disciplinary</i>	<i>Biopower</i>	<i>Societies of Control</i>
<b>Postsignifying Regime</b> <sup>7</sup>	<i>Double Turning Away</i>	<i>Betrayal</i>	<i>Indefinite Reprieve</i>	<i>Line of Flight</i>
<b>Desiring Machines</b> <sup>8</sup>	<i>Paranoic</i> Devouring Father of becoming	<i>Miraculating</i> Mother pregnant with desire	<i>Celibate</i> Becoming History	<i>Schizoanalysis</i>
<b>Unconscious Syntheses</b> <sup>9</sup>	<i>Connective synthesis</i> Production of production— “and ... and ...”	<i>Disjunctive synthesis</i> Production of recording— “either ... or ...”	<i>Conjunctive synthesis</i> Production of consummation/ consumption – “so it’s ...”	
<b>Tropic Modes</b> <sup>10</sup>	<i>Synecdoche</i> : partial	<i>Metaphor</i> : transferrable	<i>Metonymy</i> : reversible	
<b>Dimensions of the Proposition</b> <sup>11</sup>	<i>Denotation-indication</i> : (associations) particular image which ought to represent state of affairs true/false	<i>Manifestation</i> : (inferences) statement of desires/beliefs relation of speaker to proposition veracity/illusion	<i>Signification</i> : (implication) connection of concept/particular to universal/general assertion of effects of proposition condition of truth/absurd	<i>Sense</i> : (the expressed) expressed or expressible of the proposition also the attribute of state of affairs the event of meaning itself

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from (Foucault, “On the Genealogy” 110-114).

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from (Deleuze and Guattari, *a thousand plateaus* 227-231).

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from (Deleuze, *Nietzsche* 146).

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from (Deleuze, “Postscript”)

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from (*a thousand plateaus* 110-148).

<sup>8</sup> Adapted from (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 1-42).

<sup>9</sup> Adapted from (*Anti-Oedipus* 1-42).

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from (Nietzsche, *Friedrich Nietzsche* 21-23).

<sup>11</sup> Adapted from (Deleuze, *Logic of Sense* 12-22).

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## PUBLICATIONS

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Forthcoming article in *Configurations*: "Castaneda's Ecstatic Pedagogy: 'The Teachings of don Juan.'"

## PRESENTATIONS

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"Technology and Composition: Access, Ethics, Interface." *Rhetorics and Technologies*. Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA. July 2007.

"Goodbye Blue Monday: Hacker Utopianism Meets Open-Source Capitalism." *Computers and Writing* 2007. Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. May 2007.

## AWARDS

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*English Department PhD Teaching Award*, Pennsylvania State University, 2008.  
*Wilma R. Ebbitt Graduate Award in Rhetoric*, Pennsylvania State University, 2007.  
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## SERVICE

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