

ABSTRACTS

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Accessing the Archive:
The Problem of Archaeology in Foucault's Critical Ontology

The objection that Foucauldian archaeology is, at rock bottom, an incoherent methodology has proven difficult to shake. Of course, Foucault himself had a sense of this objection in the conclusion to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (AK). The fictitious objector poses the objection straightforwardly enough: "How could it [archaeological discourse] be legitimated?" Foucault's response to himself is, quite infamously, a plump red-herring: "[F]or the moment, and as far ahead as I can see, my discourse, far from determining the locus in which it speaks, is avoiding the ground on which it could find support" (AK 205). Of course, the problem is not that the grounds that could serve to legitimate archaeology are not known or simply being avoided; rather, the problem, as is often claimed, is that there are in principle no grounds that could serve to legitimate archaeology. In this paper I shall advance a version of the incoherence argument against archaeology, that is, I argue, fatal. Indeed, I shall advance the claim that this particular formulation of the argument, if not diffused, has the potential to undermine genealogy and Foucault's later, normative-minded project of critical ontology.

The paper is divided into three sections, each of which is outlined in detail below. In the first section of the paper I briefly discuss some versions of the argument for the incoherence of archaeology offered by Dreyfus/Rabinow (1983) and Todd May (2006). I then offer what I take to be the most powerful formulation of that argument, focusing on Foucault's claims about the archive. In the first place, the archive determines discursive practices "in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, and the conditions of operation of the enunciative function" (AK 117). So, archaeology itself must be a discursive practice as determined by the archive of the contemporary episteme. This alone ensures the unhappy consequence that archaeology is anachronistic, though not incoherent. In the second place, Foucault says that "it is not possible for us to describe our own archive, since it is from within these rules that we speak" (AK 130). The latter statement is, as is apparent, nonsensical: it asserts a rule that asserts no rules can be known. But taken in conjunction with the previous claim, it destroys archaeology, as Foucault commits himself to a contradiction. According to its own rules, archaeology is – incoherently – both a discursive practice determined by its archive and yet, since the archive cannot be accessed, archaeology cannot be known to be determined by its archive.

The second section discusses the relation of archaeology to critical ontology (and, by extension, genealogy), where the primary aim of the section is to establish the seriousness of the archaeological problem in relation to the latter. As is apparent from the late essay "What is Enlightenment?," Foucault envisions archaeology and genealogy to be complementary methodologies that comprise the single project of critical ontology. The aim of critical ontology is to provide sufficient distance from discursive and non-discursive practices in order to transform them *in the present*. As the first section shows, archaeology is not sufficient for this task. The genealogical method is supposed to be sufficient for such a task. But not only does Foucault utilize archaeology to prepare his genealogies, there is reason to think that Foucault must prepare his genealogies archaeologically. Since Foucault never abandons archaeology, it is the case that genealogy must be, for Foucault, a discursive practice about non-discursive practices. Unless genealogy is going to be both condemned to the present and unable to account for itself, thereby comprising critical ontology, the coherence of archaeology must be resolved.

In the final section of the paper I gesture at a response to the problem of the incoherence of archaeology. Given the set-up of the problem in the first section of the paper, I examine the possibility of denying that the archive is inaccessible and what effects this may have on Foucauldian archaeology (and genealogy). I suggest that although one's archive is accessible there are *prima facie* reasons to think that such access requires significant work, and such work may in fact be part of the practice of freedom that Foucault champions late in his career.

Genealogy as Problematization:
Why Foucault's Genealogy Does Not Commit the Genetic Fallacy

This paper summarizes one of the central conceptual claims in my current book-length research project on Michel Foucault's use of genealogy and other conceptions of genealogy found in the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, Bernard Williams, and Ian Hacking. The central claim of my book, and of this paper, is that the best account of Foucault's conception and practice of genealogy is one cast in terms of what he called 'problematization.' This view takes very seriously a claim made by Foucault in his final years: "The notion common to all the work that I have done since *Madness and Civilization* is that of problematization, though it must be said that I never isolated this notion sufficiently."

The paper is divided into roughly three parts. In the first part, I explicate Foucault's conception of genealogy as problematization by describing two ways in which Foucault used genealogy. The first usage is that clarifying existing problematizations in such a way as to reveal the conditions of the possibility of present practices. The second usage is that of intensifying these problematizations so as to critically interrogate the limits of our present practices. Genealogy as problematization in this way serves as both a historico-descriptive practice and a philosophico-critical practice.

In the second part of the paper, I address a serious and common objection to Foucault's unique combination of historical description and philosophical critique. I show that Foucault's concept of problematization enabled him to fashion genealogy as an effective form of critical inquiry without committing what many philosophers (especially those considering Foucault from analytic and critical theoretic perspectives) argue is a crucial error in genealogy: namely, the charge that genealogy commits the genetic fallacy. I show that genealogy as problematization differs from forms of philosophical critique developed by two other prominent philosophers who also referred to their work under the banner of genealogy: Friedrich Nietzsche and Bernard Williams. While Nietzsche and Williams both attempted to use genealogy to reach fairly decisive normative conclusions (a denunciation of modern morality in Nietzsche's case and a vindication of modern truthfulness in Williams's case) I show that Foucault's critical use of genealogy was far more subtle. Genealogy as problematization is not straightforwardly normative in that Foucault did not use it to show that we should be either "for or against" certain practices (a point he is explicit on in his late "What is Enlightenment?" paper). Foucault characterized his use of genealogy in explicit opposition to this sort of straightforward normative criticism: "My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do." Genealogy as problematization is best described as using genealogy to show how certain practices came to be dangerous or fraught and so in need of reconstructive response. Differentiating genealogical problematization from straightforward normative uses of genealogy in this way enables us to understand how genealogy need not commit the genetic fallacy. This point is crucial for historicist forms of critique such as genealogy.

In the third and final part of the paper I turn to reflections on how we might effectively wield genealogy as one part of a broader apparatus of critical inquiry. While Nietzsche's denunciation and Williams's vindication establish evaluative conceptions of genealogy which seek to yield normative conclusions, critical problematization is by contrast simply a call for more work. Genealogy for Foucault functions to show *how* practices are problematic and dangerous (not just *that* a practice is good or bad) in such a way as to provide us with the materials we need to begin the difficult work of addressing ourselves to these problems. It is in this sense that problematization (and Foucault's inheritance of this concept from Deleuze is here important) has rightly been referred to by many commentators as an invitation to pragmatism if not an outright exemplification of pragmatist inquiry. According to this account, genealogy helps us recognize ways in which our practices may be deeply problematic so that we can more effectively engage in the difficult work of reconstructing these practices where they are most deficient.

Genealogy vs. Archeology:
On Foucault's Methodological Metamorphoses

Michel Foucault has spoken of his methodology both as archeology and genealogy. As he has attested, in his earlier works, notably *Madness and Civilization*, *The Order of Things*, *The Birth of the Clinic*, he has adhered to archeology, on which he has elaborated in his *The Archeology of Knowledge*. But later on, in the essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," he has spoken of his method as genealogy, whose distinctive characteristics can be traced in his *The History of Sexuality*.

I shall discuss the main characteristic features of these two methodologies in order to both compare them and advance a notion of their investigative compatibility. My main motive here is to uphold the methodological value of Foucault's work for purposes of *reapplication*.

First, I shall discuss Foucault's view of archeology in terms of his concepts of *discontinuity*, *discursive events*, *archive*, and *discursive formations*. I shall focus on the way in which he distinguishes his archeological task from the investigative set-up of a tradition which has generally projected its task within a notion of "continuity" of events and has thus neglected or distorted the phenomena of "rupture." For his part, Foucault conceives of the archeological investigation as issuing from a notion of "discontinuity" and as assembling or archiving the discursive events as specific formations along certain systems of *positivity* that undo basic postulates of the traditional investigation while accounting for the irreducible dispersion of these events.

Next, I shall present his view of genealogy in terms of his elaborations on Nietzsche's view of genealogy, which Foucault takes up in the sense of *descent* [*Herkunft*] recapturing *emergence* [*Entstehung*] while dispensing with the postulates, associated with the notion of *origin* [*Ursprung*]. In his discussion of "descent," Foucault dissociates it from *heritage* [*Erbschaft*] and from the traditional self-identical cognizing subject, which he takes up as re-inscribed in its body. At the same time, he points to two different accounts of "emergence," which he links to Nietzsche's opposition between "historian's history" and "*wirkliche Historie*." Subsequently, Foucault identifies the genealogical uses of "historical sense" as dispensing with the account of the traditional historian and, instead, as settling for "what we tend to feel is without history – ... sentiments, love, conscience, instincts," i.e. the plurality of forces which inaugurate the genealogical emergence – via a "will to knowledge [*vouloir-savoir*]" – amidst an endless "play of dominations." Thus, by doing away with the epistemic foundations of the traditional historian, Foucault sets up for the genealogist an enormous task – one that "requires patience and a knowledge of details, and ... depends on a vast accumulation of source material."

In its enormity, the task in question seems unlikely to be fulfilled in its entirety; though – following Foucault's thought – it appears as the most proper demand to the investigator. To my mind, the main difficulty in the methodological *reapplication* of this sense of genealogy is in that the latter lacks any structural features, as it has been delineated precisely in terms of an undoing of any features in the traditional "historian's history." Yet its deployment does not seem to have posed a problem for Foucault himself in *The History of Sexuality*, which has compelled me to think that, in the absence of facilitating structural features, retaining this sense of genealogy alone could be sufficient for its investigative reapplication. Along this line of thought, the task of genealogy becomes open to other methodological approaches, including to ones that display more articulate structural features and are thus practically more susceptible to reapplication, so long as within their terms one can still convey the genealogist's "historical sense" that simultaneously dismantles these features.

For instance, one such approach into which genealogy could be translated is Foucault's earlier archeology. It is also perhaps the most appropriate one, since among other things it is indicative of what in his earlier methodology he himself wanted to overcome subsequently, (even if it had still retained a good sense of the arbitrary structure of the "discursive formations," as assembled from a population of dispersed discursive events). Such a translation appears to be possible, provided that on Foucault's view genealogy dispatches itself as a matter of "will to knowledge," which prominently features in his archeology as well. It can be further facilitated if one identifies pivotal points of convergence between both Foucault's earlier epistemic transition between knowledges [*connaissances*] and knowledge [*savoir*] and his later movement of dismantling the postulates of "historian's history."

In this sense, anyone who has gotten an insight into the worth of Foucault's philosophizing and is willing to reapply it methodologically should be able to deploy his genealogy *as* archeology in a purported genealogical investigation. For archeology's structural features can ultimately dissipate as a matter of a reading effect, if one

self-consciously retains the sense of genealogy as advanced in his later work. Indeed, it may be debatable whether his genealogy is fundamentally different from, or is just a more elaborate (perhaps more radical) expression of, his archeology, but my point is that what should matter in the end is whether or not the genealogist's "historical sense" has been actually conveyed.

Joanna Crosby

Why Free Tibet?
Foucault and the Seductions of Buddhism

In 2005 Janet Afary and Kevin Anderson edited *Foucault and the Iranian Revolution: Gender and the Seductions of Islamism*, compiling for the first time in English all of Foucault's work on the Iranian revolution of the late 80s. Previously, only the last few articles were available in translation and in those he is already trying to distance himself from his former support of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Here, we get to see Foucault's reportage for the Italian press, warts and all. The question is, do we learn anything other than the volatility of liberation – that no matter its source, the result can neither be predicted nor assumed good?

What, though, does this have to do with Tibet? My purpose in this paper is to draw a comparison between Foucault's support for the burgeoning Islamic theocracy in Iran to supporters of the Dalai Lama who want to reinstate him and his Buddhist theocracy in Tibet. Most who sport the familiar bumper sticker have a superficial understanding of Buddhism as well as the economic and political status of Tibet prior to the Chinese invasion. Neither do these 'Free Tibet-ers' appreciate that a return to Buddhism in Tibet will be a return to the feudalistic theocracy privileging the Buddhist monks who live off the labor of the Tibetan people.

This is not to say that the Chinese take over is necessarily any better for Tibetans than the (CIA established) Shah of Iran was for Iranians. Of course, both brought aspects of modern life and religious tolerance absent in any theocracy to their respective peoples. Yet both also are plagued by accusations of corruption and nepotism. Unfortunately, like most of politics and despite the hard work of the media and p. r. firms, the bad guy is never just bad and the good guy is never just good.

Thus, I want to argue that supporting a free Tibet is like supporting the Iranian revolution. While it is a limited metaphor, I think that it is particularly instructive considering our current involvement in Iraq. There is no way to know whether 'liberation' from Saddam Hussein will eventually contribute to a better life for Iraqis. At least for the short term, this doesn't seem to be the case.

Sokthan Yeng

Naturalization and Foucauldian Normalization of Asian Immigrants

While Foucault's theories have been employed to further ethnic and minority studies in general, his work does not have the same reach in Asian or Asian-American studies. Considering the stereotype of Asians as particularly respectful of authority and prone to obedience, one could state that the Orient lends itself too easily to Foucault's analysis of disciplinary power. Even though Foucault's framework would apply to Easterners, it would not be prudent to take the East or Easterners as the prime example because it would not be able to speak to the political conditions of the West. Yet, philosophers such as Lisa Lowe and Aihwa Ong have suggested that it is the Asian or Asian-American who is able to expose the complex network of power in a way that no other minority group within America can. Otherwise put, the Asian-American experience is useful in revealing something that would otherwise be overlooked about the American condition or political landscape.

While Asian-Americans are typically thought of as both the model minority and the silent minority, it would be tempting to think that Asian-Americans have fully succumbed to the techniques of biopower. They are allowed to enter the country depending upon the economic exigencies of the nation while still being excluded from having any political power. (Lowe, 1998; 8) One might think that the American-Asian relationship shows the principle tenets of biopower. It shows how a nation-state (America) produces particular community members

(Asians) to serve the needs and growth of the state while still striving to protect its purity. By excluding Asians from political decisions, Americans can protect their ideology from any kind of Eastern influence.

It is at this intersection that I want to use the Asian-American experience to critique America's image of itself and also bring into question possible ways in which Asian-Americans have resisted assimilation and normalizing power. Just because Asian-Americans do seem largely absent from the political landscape, it does not mean that this is all due to the American oppression of Asians-Americans. On the one hand, one could trace this back to the distrust that many Asians have of government that have its roots in Classical Chinese thought and have flowered in the conservative applications of Confucianism in modern Asian nations. (Ong, 2000; 56) On the other hand, I want to explore whether or not this reveals an assimilation of a precept that exists within American culture but one that America does not want to recognize. In particular, I want to question the place of equal representation and political power in America. Is it that Asian-Americans are not concerned with political struggles because they largely see it as futile? In which case, they resist becoming further integrated in America by refusing to buy into the discourse that power is gained through politics. Or is it the case that they have internalized something quite American? Economic prosperity is more important than political membership. For a country that prides itself on equal representation for all, this would undermine its self-image. Either way, it could be the case that a Foucauldian analysis along the lines of discipline and resistance centered on Asians does reveal something about Westerners.

Erinn Gilson

Problematic Ethics

In "On the Genealogy of Ethics," Foucault remarks that he is not interested in performing a simple "history of solutions" but instead views his work as "the genealogy of problems, of *problématiques*."¹ Thus he joins his contemporary, Gilles Deleuze, in undertaking philosophical analysis as a practice of *problematization*. Likewise, toward the end of their lives both Deleuze and Foucault turned to the problem of ethics. The initial contention of this paper is that we can develop their respective conceptions of ethics in conjunction with one another in a valuable way and can do so by situating them in the context of philosophy as a matter of *problematization*. On this understanding, ethical activity can only take place in light of an assessment of the problems to which one must respond rather than attempt to solve; ethics is to be understood as a responsive engagement with one's present. To develop this idea, I turn to Deleuze's conception of problems as generative and productive in *Difference and Repetition*.

The second, more general but corresponding premise of this paper is that the ethical thought of Foucault and Deleuze also shares a focus on the creative dimension of ethics. Both thinkers clearly characterize ethics as a type of creative *activity*. While Foucault understands ethics as a matter of practices of self-creation or care of the self, Deleuze somewhat more opaquely maintains that ethics is the "*amor fati* of philosophy" and can only be understood as endeavoring "not to be unworthy of what happens to us."² In his last book, *What is Philosophy?*, he develops this aside concerning ethical activity, and suggests that ethics is a matter of expressing the event, expressing the inexhaustible sense or meaning of what happens to us. This type of ethical expression is best achieved through artistic and philosophical creation that gives voice to these events.

Through this delineation of the way in which ethics is a stylistic and expressive activity, I show that we can discern a further norm at work in Foucault and Deleuze's ethical thought. It is often maintained, rightly, that Foucault's ethics and Deleuze's politics (little has been said of his contribution to ethical thought) is guided by an opposition to the stasis of normalizing standards, transcendent meaning, and other rigid limitations placed upon

¹ Michel Foucault, "À propos de la généalogie de l'éthique: un aperçu du travail en cours" in *Dits et écrits II* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 1202-1230, 1205; "On the Genealogy of Ethics: an Overview of Work in Progress" in ed. Paul Rabinow, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* (New York: The New Press, 1994), 254-280, 256.

² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991), 151; *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 159. Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du Sens* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1969), 174; *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 149.

creative transformation.³ The two philosophers seek the openness and mobility that will permit us to become new and unforeseen selves rather than normalizing or molar forms of subjectivity that constrain or preclude self-transformation. Further, this type of creative activity requires critical engagement; ethics involves a genealogical perspective in order to be truly a practice of freedom.⁴ It is the contention of this paper, however, that ethics requires a bit more.

A simultaneously critical and creative ethical practice is also, necessarily, one that presents a *response* to the problems of the present in which one finds oneself.⁵ Both Foucault and Deleuze acknowledge that the practices through which we endeavor to resist oppressive structures can be as dangerous as those we seek to escape; we can tumble into “micro-fascism” or subscribe to the “Californian cult of the self.”⁶ This tendency is the case precisely because there is no longer any transcendent ground for ethics, only an opening for change and the possibility for the enactment of diverse styles of being. The ontological condition of ethics – what Foucault calls *liberté* and Deleuze calls the plane of immanence – makes unethical forms of existence possible as well ethical ones; it is ambiguous. Consequently, if ethics is to be “the considered form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection,” then it must be a practice that comprehends the dangers we face, comprehends the dangers of open-ended creation.⁷ A problematizing ethics is a responsive ethics, and one that responds to both particular historical and political exigencies and to its own ambiguous condition. For both thinkers, then, ethical practices – whether they are practices of self-creation or artistic creation or philosophical creation – are ultimately those that speak or testify to something fundamental about being. In conclusion, I suggest that the creative ethics of Foucault and Deleuze do not wholly converge, but supplement one another in important ways: Deleuze supplies a notion of alterity that Foucault perhaps lacks and Foucault supplies a sense of the self and subjectivity as a process that Deleuze lacks.

Jeffrey Bussolini

**Nuclear State of Exception:
Reading and Extension of Foucault's Concepts of Biopower
and Biopolitics in Agamben and the Nuclear Age**

Near the beginning of *Stato de eccezione*, Giorgio Agamben includes a very telling quotation from Rossiter: “Nell’era atomica in cui il mondo sta ora entrando, è probabile che l’uso dei poteri di emergenza costituzionale divenga la regola e non l’eccezione. (In the atomic era into which the world is now entering, it is likely that the use of constitutional emergency powers will become the rule rather than the exception).” Studying the atomic age along these lines, as well as those of the earlier considerations on biopolitics in Agamben’s *Homo Sacer* and Michel Foucault’s lecture courses at the College de France from 1976-1979 (including the crucial concepts of permanent war and the importance of conquest and colonization in contemporary state structures), bears out Rossiter’s quotation—the advent of nuclear technology has indeed coincided with an augmentation of biopolitics and continued hostility both between and within states.

By any reckoning nuclear weapons are major artifacts of geopolitics and biopolitics. They are inherently geopolitical tools that emerged from a history of intense inter-state conflict, and their scope and effects make any use a geopolitical event (despite repeated attempts to fashion smaller ‘battlefield’ or ‘tactical’ nukes and come up

³ See, for an exemplary instance, Ladelle McWhorter’s discussion in chapter seven of her *Bodies and Pleasures: Foucault and the Politics of Sexual Normalization* (Bloomington: Indiana, 1999), 193-199.

⁴ See pp.16-20 of James W. Bernauer’s *Michel Foucault’s Force of Flight: Toward an Ethics for Thought* (London: Humanities Press, 1990).

⁵ See “À propos de la généalogie de l’éthique: un aperçu du travail en cours,” 1210/“On the Genealogy of Ethics: an Overview of Work in Progress,” 261.

⁶ For instance, Deleuze’s “Contrôle et devenir” in *Pourparlers* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 2003), 229-239; “Control and Becoming” in *Negotiations* (New York: Columbia, 1990), 169-176. The danger of tactics of resistance is also an important theme in *Mille Plateaux*. “À propos de la généalogie de l’éthique: un aperçu du travail en cours,” 271/1221.

⁷ “L’éthique du souci de soi comme pratique de la liberté” in *Dits et écrits II* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 1527-1548, 1531; “The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom” in ed. Paul Rabinow, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* (New York: The New Press, 1994), 281-301, 284.

with scenarios for their employment). The nuclear age is characterized by distrust and hostility between states as well as suspicion of a state's own citizens and populations (as foreign agents, active threats, or as insufficiently disciplined to handle the secrets and necessary actions of security). Lending credence to the notion that the atomic age is closely linked to a state of exception as nationalist norm, all countries that have developed nuclear arms have substantial secret institutions devoted to developing them and devising plans for their possible use. Nuclear secrets are among the most closely guarded of national security matters. In the United States, all information about nuclear arms is 'born classified' and automatically subject to strict controls, the only such category in U.S. classification. The 1947 Smyth Report on the Manhattan Project and U.S. nuclear science says that the secrets of the weapons "must remain secret now and for all time." Clearly these are regarded as central pillars of geopolitics.

The very real threat of Armageddon from these weapons easily gives way to thinking of expediency and triage which instrumentalizes certain populations. The fate of those at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the continuing collection of data about them by the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission, has been described in Robert Jay Lifton's *Death in Life*. Thousands of soldiers and scientists from different nations have been exposed in tests and research. Indigenous people from the American southwest to the Pacific Islands, Kazakhstan, and Algeria have been forcefully relocated to make room for atomic tests, exposed to radiation, or both. Groups such as prisoners and mental patients have been subjected to radiation experiments against their will or knowledge, supposedly for the purpose of building up crucial knowledge about nuclear effects, as documented in Eileen Welsome's *Plutonium Files* and Department of Energy reports on Human Radiation Experiments. These weapons, then, are intimately tied to power over life and death and the management of subject populations. As such, it seems that the exigency related to nuclear thinking justifies (or is the expression of) significant sovereign power over bare life. In the histories mentioned here, survival and protection of the population at large was seen to validate causing death or illness among smaller subsets of that population. One can note that, given their scale, nuclear weapons force consideration of population-level dynamics, as whole populations are placed at risk. In this respect, these arms follow on and accentuate the massive strategic bombing of World War II in which enemy populations were targeted as vital biopolitical resources.

In developing his thoughts on states of exception and bare life, Agamben draws explicitly on the work of Michel Foucault. In addition to being of interest in terms of the intellectual history of geopolitics, I believe that the aspects of Foucault upon which he draws also help us to notice some important aspects of the nuclear age and its attendant shifts in government. Agamben draws especially on Foucault's lecture courses from 1976-1979 at the College de France (*Il faut défendre la société; Sécurité, territoire, population; and Naissance de la biopolitique*). I have been undertaking study of those courses, along with Agamben's *Stato di eccezione* and *Homo Sacer: il potere sovrano e la nuda vita*, in order to investigate the Nuclear State of Exception under which the acquisition and production of nuclear arms justifies permanent emergency powers, intense secrecy, and harm or sacrifice of portions of state population.

In *Il faut défendre la société*, Foucault begins to elucidate his concept of permanent war (la guerre perpétuelle) as a model for modern society. According to him this state of permanent war is the backdrop (or the foreground) for thinking about sovereignty, and it has to do with the fact of invasion, conquest, and colonization. Through considering the examples of the Norman conquest of England, the Franc conquest of Gaulle, and, briefly, the example of the European colonization of Native Americans, he describes a situation of invasion in which permanent antagonism between conqueror and conquered is inevitable, hence a permanent war. Seen from this point of view, it is not surprising that major nuclear powers including the United States, France, and the Soviet Union all carried out dangerous nuclear experiments in colonized territories populated by indigenous peoples—these tests were an active symbol and a continuation of the conquest. State sovereignty is a mechanism used to legitimize and increase the power of the conqueror, preventing the outbreak of the dreaded 'war of all against all' that Hobbes feared. But, in another sense, this situation *is* the war of all against all. According to this line of thinking, the Nuclear State of Exception is also a special kind of class warfare in which the power of the sovereign state is increased to maddening levels while the state population is increasingly seen as a conquered group upon whom the sovereignty must be secured. Certainly, communists in the United States bore an especially intense brunt of the Nuclear State of Exception.

Near the end of this volume Foucault makes the explicit linkage between the nuclear age and biopolitics as, he says, placing the population under an absolute risk of death was a necessary precursor and transition to biopolitical management of life.

In *Securité, territoire, population*, Foucault further elucidates his thinking on sovereignty by considering the way that it focuses on the need for demonstrable securing of territory and population. The emphasis on protection of territory in the nuclear age, through extensive radar, satellites, strategic bombers, missiles, undersea sonar nets, submarines, and the like, is well known. Especially, Foucault focuses on the need for regulation and guidance of populations to ensure national vitality (in ascending liberalism). As a result public health campaigns and human government (governmentality) come to have new importance. He relates this to the augmentation of state sovereignty through the increasing development of a liberal, laissez-faire system in which subjects and workers must be fit, self-guiding, and motivated. It is interesting to note that the atomic age/Cold War discourse of the United States was heavily oriented in this direction in which the integrity of populations and the motivation of individual citizens was seen as crucial to the overall vitality of the nation—and thus intimately tied to chances of winning or losing the geopolitical contest. Recall the insane General Ripper from Kubrick's masterpiece *Dr. Strangelove* and his maniacal obsession with 'Purity of Essence' on the part of the American population.

In *Naissance de la biopolitique* Foucault continues his treatment of liberalism and neoliberalism as modern forms of government, calling liberalism 'the general frame of biopolitics' ('le cadre general de la biopolitique'). One important aspect of this is the pairing of 'laissez-faire' liberal emphasis on rights with strong sovereign states of overwhelming power. Flowing from this is a bifurcation (or multiple segmentation) of populations into more and less desirable groups. The agents and workers of neoliberalism versus those who do not fit within, or who oppose, the liberal model. It is precisely this aspect of biopolitics that Agamben picks up on in *Homo Sacer* and the section on 'la vita indigna di essere vissuta' ('life that is not worth living'). As we have already seen, the Nuclear State of Exception bears this out as some parts of the population were selected as vital/productive, while other parts of the population, especially the colonized and undesirables, were classed as expendable and subjected to various harms of nuclear technology.

Ferit Güven

Foucault, Bio-disciplinary Power and the Problem of Democracy

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that Foucault's conception of power developed in *Discipline and Punish* (disciplinary power) and *The History of Sexuality* (bio-power), provides an adequate starting point for understanding the functioning of the ideal of democracy. My paper aims to demystify our unreflective fascination with democracy today and sets the concept of democracy into a critical context. My argument has two dimensions: First, I propose that claims made from within democratic discourse regarding other political systems are claims of bio-disciplinary power. Second, the specific power relations that exist within democracy can neither be reduced to struggles for emancipation or freedom, nor to the structures of oppression and repression. This does not mean that there are no claims for freedom and resistance to oppression within democracies. However, these claims do not function outside of bio-discipline, indeed these claims are the concretion of bio-disciplinary power. Hence my claim is not that democracy functions in a totalitarian or oppressive way, but rather the functioning of democracy can be best explained in terms of bio-disciplinary power. My analysis of democracy relies neither on some kind of conspiratorial "thought-control" strategy nor on a liberal commitment to the sovereign subject, who cuts through the darkness associated with evil forces in society and reaches the light through struggle. I do not say that this discursive subject does not exist, but I claim that it functions in an entirely different way within democratic discourse.

Foucault's notion of bio-disciplinary power also explains the difference between modern democracy and the ancient Greek conception of democracy without appealing to the classical conception of sovereignty. This conception of sovereignty presupposes a unity. Consequently, critiques of democratic structures presume the same kind of unity when they criticize the "power elite," "agenda setting media" etc. Democratic discourse does not manufacture consent, but rather produces the unity of a political subject. The bio-disciplinary power does not function as a unified system, in a comprehensive and exhaustive fashion. It, therefore, does not rely on a unified theory of sovereignty. Foucault's conception of bio-disciplinary power, however, has to be supplemented by what I call cogito-logical power, or cogito-logical effects. By "cogitological" power, I mean neither the power of the cogito, nor the power of logic. This power emanates neither from the thinking subject (cogito), nor from the rules of logic, or reason, but rather it is a discursive power that manufactures the rational, thinking subjects of

democracy. Cogitological power functions as a third dimension of the bio-disciplinary axis. In addition to obedient subjects and populations, cogito-logical power forms political, thinking subjects imagining themselves at the center of the problem of unity. I claim that the functioning of democratic discourse as well as its practice can be most effectively understood in terms of cogito-logical power.

Razvan Amironesei

The Double Function of Religion in Foucault's work

In this paper, one will raise a tension between two different treatments of religion in Foucault's work. The first one shows how a transfer of technological power operates and the second deals with the historical possibility of an emerging "spiritual politics" in the Iranian revolution (1978-1979). Let us begin with the first approach. The remarks that Foucault makes on T. Szasz's "The Manufacture of Madness" are quite important in order to underline the first approach concerning the political function of religion. Szasz shows us how a transfer of power tactics operates from a religious plane, or rather a *theologico-moral* plan towards a *technico-political* plane. "What is relevant and important about Szasz's book is to prove that there is continuity, not between the witch and the asylum's patients, but continuity between the witchcraft institution and the psychiatric institution [...]. He shows that a certain type of power exerts through surveillances, interrogation procedures or the Inquisition's decrees". (Michel Foucault, *Dits et Ecrits II*, txt 175 p.90). If power is thought of as a relation, one must seize it in its exertion and in its points of application on the social field. This implies to start the analysis from an elementary level in order to understand how the tactics of power articulate and deploy in order to seize them in their specificity.

However, the 'transfer' of power technology does not appear to Foucault in the form of a secularization or an 'immanentization' of religious categories in modernity as this is treated, for example, in Max Weber's work. On the contrary, the technological 'transfer' rather refers to a 'process' of investment of reality (see for instance the lecture of 26 February, 1975, *Abnormal - Lecture at the Collège de France 1974-1975*). As a result, the internal heterogeneity of power relations and the articulation of tactics in the social field allow us to see religion not only as a set of values and beliefs, but first of all as a regulated practice to govern human life. But the idea of a transfer of power has also a direct consequence on the productive finalities of power technologies. More precisely, one can see in the disciplinary project the production of a useful and docile body which integrates the theological injunction of a perfect body in order to pin a corporeal state of obedience.

The second approach of religion can be located in Foucault's comments on the Iranian revolution. According to him, the thesis of a "spiritual politics" of an Islamic government should be treated as a *possibility* of an historical event and not simply an 'impossibility' (Foucault alludes to the French historian Maxime Rodinson). The question is how a spiritual politics is articulated in the Iranian revolution or to put it differently, what do Iranians wish? The answer is, they wish "everything". In order to understand the previous sentence one should mention that religion places the individuals in the horizon where the 'whole' (*l'absolu*) functions as a limit always re-created. Nevertheless, this limit, which is surpassing itself, traces an indefinite repetition. Foucault shows the shape of the collective will in the context of street manifestation where the crowd repeatedly reorganizes protests even when their life is wasted under police fire. Two words shape the experience of the self as Foucault sees it in the Iranian revolution: *the limit* and *the intensity*.

However, in order to better understand the significance of a spiritual meaning of a political experience, one should point out that religion invests human affects (e.g. humiliation, anger etc.) by coagulating them into a collective "political will". Religion structures the human affects and gives them a finalized form. Moreover, in the case of the Iranian revolution religion elaborates a 'policy of affects' mobilizing them by the simplicity of their requests, in the absence of a political platform (*un programme vide*), and through the evanescent presence of a spiritual leader. The productive finality of a spiritual governance of the individuals opens to an experience of the self and to a defined practice of liberty. But this liberty should not be seen as a simple transformation of one's self, but rather as a production of an identity. Religion is a governing body which produces subjects.

In short, our objective in this paper is to explore a tension between two different approaches of religion in Foucault's work. The first one deals with the displacement of moral and theological tactics into a technico-political plane. The consequence is that in discipline, the conservation of a machine body requests to pin a

corporeal state of obedience doubled by an extensive regulation through the means of a theological and moral injunction of perfection.

The second approach focuses on how a collective political will articulated in the Iranian revolution opens to a “spiritual politics”. This time, religion invests human affects (e.g. anger, humiliation etc.) by coagulating them into a unitary political will and by arranging a ‘policy of affects’. The consequence is that the mere possibility of making a spiritual experience through religion sets the terms of a continual production of identity.

Matthew Chrulew

Suspicion and Love: Foucault, Christianity, Critique

Religion now occupies a central place in contemporary debates in critical theory. In particular, the political legacy of Christianity has come under renewed scrutiny. Central to these discussions has been intense interest in the writings of Paul: prominent figures such as Alain Badiou, Slavoj _i_ek and Giorgio Agamben have all recently wrestled with the apostle’s enigmatic epistles. But while many might have expected a political critique of the Pauline legacy, we instead find that the objective of this ‘return to Paul’ is more often the recovery of a radical politics, for example when Badiou presents Paul as the founder of universalism.

Within the confines of Foucault studies, there has also been a growing scholarship on religious themes, led by the work of James Bernauer and Jeremy Carrette. This field has examined the religious dimensions of Foucault’s own work, as well as applying Foucauldian thought to a number of religious themes and figures. As a whole, however, there has been little engagement with the broader debate over religion and politics. It is time not only, as John McSweeney argues, ‘to engage with thinkers like Derrida and de Certeau, who have grappled more explicitly with theoretical questions surrounding the intersection of poststructuralist thought and theology’,⁸ but to engage also with the ‘post-poststructuralist’ thought of Agamben, Badiou, _i_ek, Hardt and Negri, and the like, whose political discourse is increasingly coming to be permeated by theological and biblical themes and references.

Thus, towards reintroducing Foucauldian thought into this wider debate, the goal of this paper is to consider Foucault’s genealogy of biopower as a critique of the politics of love. For one of the striking characteristics of the current debate is the restoration of *love* as a political concept. After a long time in the sidelines, partly at the hands of its critique by postmodern thinkers, love is reemerging as a central category of political thought, one prominent example being in the work of _i_ek.⁹ But there is an extent to which the wave of political thought that has emerged after poststructuralism has sought too quickly to jettison the suspicion of positive political projects for which Derrida, Foucault and the like are notorious.¹⁰ As David Nirenberg seeks to remind us, ‘What is startling is that those who prescribe love and its politics are untroubled by or unaware of its long history of disappointment.’¹¹ Foucault’s work, I will argue, provides key resources for an assessment of that history. According to Foucault’s analysis – given greater depth by the publication of his lectures – modern, secular political reason (understood in terms of governmentality and biopolitics) did not relinquish but rather extended and modified the power-relations developed in the pastorate: a ‘Christianisation-in-depth’.

The point is not, of course, to reject outright all attempts to conceive positive (or constituent) politics, whether in terms of Christian love or otherwise. But neither should we so quickly abandon the permanent suspicion that Foucault and other philosophers of his generation found necessary in the aftermath of fascism. For J. Joyce Schuld, considering Foucault’s concept of power alongside Augustine’s concept of love results in a

⁸ John McSweeney, ‘Foucault and Theology’, *Foucault Studies*, 2 (2005), pp. 117-144, on p. 143.

⁹ See, for example, Slavoj _i_ek, *The Fragile Absolute: or, Why is the Christian legacy worth fighting for?* (London & New York: Verso, 2000).

¹⁰ See, for example, Richard Beardsworth, ‘A Note to a Political Understanding of Love in our Global Age’, *Contretemps* 6 (2006): 2-10.

¹¹ David Nirenberg, ‘The Politics of Love and Its Enemies’, *Critical Inquiry* 33 (2007), pp. 573-605, on p. 575.

revitalisation of both.¹² In a similar vein, I will argue, Foucault's genealogy of pastoral power and modern biopolitics is an essential, critical touchstone for any attempt to rethink the positive politics of love.

Paul Gyllenhammer

**Husserl's "Aesthetics of Existence":
Reading Husserl through Foucault**

At first glance, Husserl's treatment of normality has little to do with Foucault's. Husserl discusses the emergence or constitution of norms from a subjective perspective whereas Foucault targets norms as a coercive problem. But if we recognize that the body is the locus of concern for both Husserl's and Foucault's account of normality, then we can see that Foucault's account of the 'aesthetics of existence', as a kind of virtuous orientation in the world, dovetails nicely with Husserl's account of bodily optimization. Here, it will be important to show that Husserl's account is not driven by a sense of optimization that is inherently teleological or progressive; rather, the body of the person is fundamentally mutable in its affective orientation in the world. Husserl's dynamic sense of bodily optimization lends itself to Foucault's concern for the art of living.

Part One: Husserl's sense of optimization is developed from *Ideas II*. The task is to refocus the discussion away from the object of perception and toward the body itself as the object to be optimized. This part of the presentation introduces basic terms, such as normality, optimality, and transformative anomaly. A special emphasis is given to Husserl's *genetic* perspective.

Part Two: Foucault's account of the "Deviant" from *Discipline and Punish* is developed. Here, the rift between Foucault's account and Husserl's is established. Individuality is made into a problem (the deviant) insofar as the norms of the prison are not inculcated into the very *being* of the prisoner. Techniques of surveillance and punishment are intended to transform the very thoughts, actions, and affective dispositions of the criminal, but the methods fail and end up creating a systematically created outcast.

Part Three: Husserl is also aware of a level of normality that is external to the subject and to which the subject becomes "enformed" through engagement. Husserl is sensitive to this dimension in his development of the *homeworld*. I rely heavily on Anthony Steinbock's treatment of this phenomenon in his text, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology After Husserl*. At this point, I develop my own idea of an "optimizing practice," which can do justice to the intersection of the subjective and intersubjective in Husserl as well as offer room for the needed critique from Foucault.

Part Four: A discussion is offered of Foucault's virtue of "normative resistance" as a way of understanding his suggestive notion of an "aesthetics of existence." An attempt is then made to show that Husserl's sense of subjective optimization, seen through Foucault's critical lens, is helpful in developing an idea of what the art of living might entail.

John Hartmann

Revisiting Foucault's Phenomenological Heritage

One of the more heartening trends in recent Foucault scholarship has been the renewed interest in Foucault's version of transcendental philosophy.¹³ At issue here is the peculiar intertwining of the historical and the transcendental in Foucault's work. On the face of it, such an amalgamation is untenable – the transcendental is, at least traditionally, understood to be outside of experience, beyond or 'beneath' the realm of the empirical, such that the notion of a historical a priori seems intrinsically problematic.

¹² J. Joyce Schuld, *Foucault and Augustine: Reconsidering Power and Love* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), pp. 31-3.

¹³ See Han, Oksala (2003, 2005), and in particular, Thompson (forthcoming).

A proper understanding of the historical a priori is, first and foremost, essential for grasping the nature of Foucault's methodology and its internal changes. Although the name for this concept changes throughout his career – it is called *épistème*, *dispositif*, *problématisation*, etc. – the question remains more or less the same throughout the years. How is the project of a transcendental philosophy that is thoroughly historical, of a transcendental realm that is imbued with historicity, to be articulated?

More than this, however, the problem of the historical a priori is fundamental to transcendental philosophy writ large, and to phenomenological inquiry in particular. In the last of his major works, the *Krisis*, Husserl described the historical sedimentation of the lifeworld, such that the phenomenological project can be described as archeological in nature.¹⁴ The centrality of the problem of historicity in sense constitution led Ludwig Landgrebe to devote an entire essay to Husserl's statement that "history is the grand fact of absolute being."¹⁵

Foucault, of course, was well aware of the phenomenological heritage of his work. As is (increasingly) well known, Foucault situated his work in one line of the French appropriation of Husserlian phenomenology. This line, running from Cavailles through Canguilhem to Foucault himself, can be understood as effecting a retreat from the primacy of the subject in phenomenology and its replacement with a 'phenomenology of the concept.' Already in Cavailles, then, we find the first waves that will eventually wipe the face of man out to sea. Now, the critical importance of Cavailles for a proper understanding of the historical a priori in Foucault has been amply established,¹⁶ and as such, I take it for granted in this paper. What I want to do here is investigate an alternative. In her recent book and an article,¹⁷ Johanna Oksala takes up the work of Anthony Steinbock, and the idea of a generative phenomenology, as being allied with Foucault's account of the historical a priori. What I think is valuable here is the idea to take seriously, in a rigorous way, the issue of historicity in phenomenology and, more broadly, transcendental phenomenology. But the linking of Foucault and Steinbock on this issue is potentially problematic, given the difference in where each thinker begins. Steinbock's generative phenomenology is rooted in Husserl's *Krisis* texts, while Foucault's association with Cavailles problematizes this link insofar as Cavailles offered a fundamental criticism of the late Husserl.

The goal of this paper, then, is the following. First, I want to explore Oksala's link between Foucault and Steinbock, and see what differences, if any, exist between the two thinkers. Second, I want to evaluate this alternative to the phenomenology of the concept that is usually taken to be so central to Foucault's account of the historical a priori. These two themes will assist me with the general problem of understanding both Foucault's relevance for contemporary phenomenology, as well as the nature of his particular version of transcendental philosophy.

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¹⁴ See Cavailles, 408.

¹⁵ Landgrebe (1974). See also Landgrebe (1981).

¹⁶ See Thompson for a careful articulation of the way in which two competing interpretations of the relation between the historical and the transcendental in Foucault (i.e., Han and Deleuze) both depend upon the presupposition that the transcendental cannot be historical in nature. Understanding Foucault's phenomenological heritage, his being rooted in this phenomenology of the concept, helps open the possibility that such an intertwining can be articulated.

¹⁷ See Oksala (2003, 2005).

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Chloë Taylor

Foucault and Familial Power

We frequently speak of familial power as disciplinary. Children, we say, are disciplined by their parents. Even within Foucaultian circles, the need to discipline children rather than letting them run amuck is regularly given as the obvious case of the positive value of discipline, despite Foucault's largely negative account (Amy Allen, for instance). While not wishing to deny the relationship of the family to disciplinary power, this paper will complicate the picture of familial power within a Foucaultian framework, first by describing Foucault's account of the family as a fundamentally sovereign institution, and second by considering the family in terms of Foucault's final work on the care of the self.

For Foucault, the family is a sovereign institution, whose power has been slowly diluted over time, and which has become infiltrated by discipline only recently and in supplementary ways. In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault describes the ancient Roman *familia* as the pure example of sovereign power, while also describing the fall of the father (suspected of incest) and the manners in which the nineteenth-century family was penetrated by the sexual sciences and became saturated with sexuality.

In *Psychiatric Power* Foucault gives a more complicated account of familial power as fundamentally sovereign. Sovereign power, he writes, is grounded either in blood right or in conquest (the shedding of blood). Sovereign power regularly reinscribes its power through rituals which refer back to this original event of bloodshed or blood right. Under sovereign power, individuality is located at the top, in the body of the sovereign, while those submitted to sovereign power are not individuated. In contrast, disciplinary power is future-oriented, replacing backwards-looking rituals with graduated exercises aiming at an optimal future (disciplined) state. Disciplinary power is justified by its subjects' internalization of the desirability of this future state, rather than by reminders of an original conquest and blood right. Under disciplinary power, power is de-individualized (or everywhere) while those submitted to discipline are individualized. For Foucault, the authority of the father over his children in the traditional family is clearly based on blood right (and we might add that marriage, or the husband's authority over his wife, is traditionally seen as a conquest involving bloodshed). The family regularly reminds its members of its authority through the celebration of backward-looking rituals, such as birthdays and wedding anniversaries. Foucault argues that the father is individuated in the family in the way that none of the other family members are, and this assertion can be defended in the case of the traditional family, even if it is far less true today.

Despite these reasons for viewing the family as sovereign, the family also clearly justifies its power through its ability to produce disciplined subjects, and child-rearing involves graduated exercises (often involving a strict timetable) which aims at a future optimal state: the production of healthy, well-adjusted, productive adults. In the modern family, the power of the father has been greatly diminished, while the mother and children are more individuated than before. Accordingly, Foucault recognizes in *Psychiatric Power* and in *The History of Sexuality* that the family has been penetrated by disciplinary power, becoming a "little clinic." The family is, moreover, disciplined from the outside, as both Foucault and Ellen Feder have shown. The family's sovereign power to punish (to wield the sword, to shed blood, to punish in spectacular or corporeal ways), has virtually disappeared in Western societies, and, if exercised, will be followed by interventions by disciplinary agents and institutions such as social workers, psychiatrists, prison. Foucault describes some of these complex interweavings of disciplinary power with sovereign power in the case of the family in both *Psychiatric Power* and *The History of Sexuality*, but

never ceases to see the family as a fundamentally sovereign institution. Moreover, he argues that the sovereign power of the family is not anachronistic and bound to disappear within a disciplinary age, but plays a highly strategic role within disciplinary power: the sovereign power of the family is necessary to insert its members into disciplinary institutions, while disciplinary institutions return the favor by producing familialized subjects, or subjects who will submit to the family and its values (good mothers, obedient children, loving spouses).

Given the ways in which the family has changed since the 1970s, and given new forms of family which are rapidly becoming more accepted (such as children raised by two gay men, neither of whom may be related to the child by blood), one objective of this paper will be to argue that the sovereign power of the family has been even further eclipsed by disciplinary power since the time of Foucault's writing, and yet I will defend the view that it has not yet ceased to be a sovereign institution due to the inescapable fact that in the case which remains the norm, its power is one of blood right.

In "Foucault's Mother," Jon Simons notes that the family, and mothers in particular, are disciplined, however he also argues that the power of mothers over children is neither disciplinary nor sovereign, but can be understood as a more positive kind of care of the self extended to others. Several Foucaultian scholars (Oksala, myself) have argued that Foucault's final work on the care of the self in fact *needs* to be expanded upon in order to think of care of others, if it is to truly be conceived of as an "ethics," and that it might usefully be thought through in relation to feminist care ethics, which takes maternal (or parental, familial) care as a paradigm. In the last section of this paper I will therefore argue that thinking about maternal or parental power is one way in which we might bring together Foucault's thought on self-care with an account of caring for others, and in which we may further complicate our understanding of the workings of familial power.

If self-care, or viewing the self as a work of art, employs disciplinary techniques but, importantly, aims at achieving the subject's autonomy rather than her subjection, we might say that in the case of familial care disciplinary strategies may be employed with the ultimate objective of creating autonomous subjects. As in Foucault's example of the Stoics who originally submitted to a master's discipline but did so only temporarily, with the ultimate objective of achieving self-mastery, children are submitted to their parents in a temporary (although, granted, less voluntary) fashion, and parents hope that their children will one day attain a state of self-mastery. Children are objects of a kind of care which aims at the autonomy of the other. They may also be viewed as works of art by their parents, but are one day to take over this artistic project for themselves.

Of course this account is highly idealized and must be qualified in at least two ways: first, some parents do not wish their children to attain self-mastery, but cultivate a life-long submission to the family on the part of their offspring. Such parents see their children as works of art but do not tolerate any artistic interventions on the part of their product; moreover, these practices of self-care and care of the other are always intertwined with discipline as well as sovereign power, and the autonomy in question is only ever possible within the constraints of one's culture. Nevertheless, I will argue in this paper that it is possible to think about familial relations, including the relations between parents and children, not only as instances of sovereign and disciplinary power, but also in terms of Foucault's final work on the care of the self. I will moreover argue that this discussion usefully extends Foucault's work on self-care to think about caring for others.

Corey McCall

Foucault and Political Theatricality

It is a commonplace to observe that vision and visibility play a vital role in Foucault's work, both early and late: in this regard, Foucault's work is profoundly aesthetic and optical¹⁸. The examples one could cite are numerous: from the medical gaze that first made corpses visible in the Classical Age to the spectacular example of the regicide Damians that opens *Discipline and Punish* and at various other points throughout his work, Foucault relies upon the visual in order to elucidate his philosophical points; indeed, one could argue that this is an essential dimension of Foucault's thought. I examine this aspect of Foucault's work in two ways. The first section deals with the dimension of what I will call political theatricality as an aspect of Foucault's analyses of

¹⁸ For a reading of this aspect of Foucault's work in comparison with Nietzsche, see Gary Shapiro, *Archaeologies of Vision: Foucault and Nietzsche on Seeing and Saying* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

sovereign power, while the second section looks at the dramatic element in Foucault's conception of critique. The purpose of this paper is to analyze political theatricality as an object of Foucault's various analyses of sovereign power and as a dimension of his conception of philosophical praxis.

Foucault develops this idea of political theatricality as an element of sovereign power in both his lecture courses at the Collège de France and in his published work, most notably *Discipline and Punish*. Investigating this aspect of Foucault's work will demonstrate that this theatrical dimension is essential to Foucault's various analyses of sovereign power. One sees this in his analysis of the simultaneously spectacular and inefficient ways that the sovereign's power manifests itself in the *ancien regime*. In his 1976 lecture course *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault discusses the fundamental relationship between public right and tragedy, both ancient and modern:

It should not be forgotten that in the seventeenth century, and not only in France, tragedy was one of the great ritual forms in which public right was displayed and in which its problems were discussed. Well, Shakespeare's "historical" tragedies are tragedies about right and the king, and they are essentially centered on the problem of the usurper and dethronement, of the murder of kings and the birth of the new being who is constituted by the coronation of the king. How can an individual use violence, intrigue, murder, and war to acquire a public might that can bring about the reign of peace, justice, order, and happiness?¹⁹

Foucault discusses this link between Shakespearean tragedy and its French counterparts in the 1976 course. In his 1978 lecture course *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault returns to this idea of the relationship between politics and theater—the question of political representation. Although he repeats some of what he said in the previous lecture course, the emphasis is somewhat different. In the 1976 lecture course, Foucault emphasizes that public right and tragedy are always conjoined; in *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault argues that "Classical drama is basically organized around the *coup d'Etat*" and that the *coup d'Etat* is essentially theatrical.

Initially, it would seem that a simple distinction could be made between sovereign power that manifests itself visually through eye-catching displays and disciplinary power that manifests itself less spectacularly but more efficiently through the various disciplinary practices Foucault analyzes in *Discipline and Punish* and elsewhere. Of course, even in this case, it is not a simple matter of visible and invisible power; consider the well-known example of the panopticon. Still, there is a difference in the modality of visibility that occurs in the transition from sovereign to disciplinary power and from disciplinary power to biopower. This first section concludes by briefly tracing these various transformations.

In this section, I examine the dramatic element in Foucault's conception of the philosophical exercise of parrhesia (frank or fearless speech). In his final lecture courses and writings, Foucault provides a genealogy of the critical attitude from the ancients through the Christians and up to the Enlightenment. There are two issues at stake here. First, the critical attitude can take the form of work that one does upon oneself in terms of how and what one sees. For example, Foucault cites Senecan practices of self-examination (*speculator sui*) that is essentially visual in nature; the practice of critique involves seeing.²⁰ Equally as important is the dimension of being seen and various manifestations of the critical attitude throughout history display this dimension. I pay particular attention to this dimension of the critical attitude of being seen (the dramatic dimension proper) as it is embodied in Foucault's various readings of Socrates, Kant, and Baudelaire in order to show that this element of political theatricality is vital for both an understanding various mechanisms of power and the critical resources that have been developed and that might be further developed in order to question various intolerable power relations.

¹⁹ Michel Foucault, *Must Society Be Defended?*, p. 174.

²⁰ See e.g. Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*. Ed. Joseph Pearson (LA: Semiotext(e), 2001), p. 148