Foucault Studies

ARTICLE

Suspicion and Love

Matthew Chrulew, University of New South Wales

ABSTRACT: Recent philosophy has witnessed a number of prominent and ambivalent en-counters with Christianity. Alongside the retrievals of Paul and political theology, thinkers such as Žižek and Negri argue that in our era of imperial sovereignty and advanced global capitalism, the most appropriate politics is one of love. These attempts to reinvigorate pro-gressive materialism are often characterised as a break with the relativist tendencies of French philosophy, moving from the negativity and disconnection of postmodern suspicion to a new, constructive politics of creativity and fraternity. Deconstructive critiques have insisted on the exclusions necessary to any such politics of love. Foucault's genealogy of Christianity—specifically, of the emergence from pastoral power of modern governmentality and biopoli-tics—sketches a further significant dimension of love's suffocating history and contemporary risks.

Keywords: Love, pastoral power, biopolitics, Foucault, Negri.

The Politics of Love

It is perhaps only recently that the left has come to accept that it can no longer simply discount religion as an irritating residue of the pre-Enlightenment past. The political legacy of Christi-anity has come under renewed scrutiny; scholars are trawling the Christian archive and redis-covering remarkable expressions of spirited and suffering life that continue to provide both sustenance and scandal to Western self-understanding. How deeply does the religion of love in-form us? Must this heritage be finally overcome, or can it be rekindled towards radical ends?

One of the most striking characteristics of recent attempts at post-secular, Christian re-newal is the restoration of *love* as a political concept. A number of thinkers argue that, in our era of imperial sovereignty and advanced global capitalism, we would do well to emulate the *agape* of the early Christian congregations established and encouraged by Paul. To love one's neighbour is the political act proper to today. For all its erstwhile value, the postmodern de-construction of unity and belonging in favour of irreducible difference now appears inade-quate. Jean-Luc Nancy, for example, refuses the blackmail that suspects "a kind of vague fas-cism" behind every notion of community, insisting that concepts such as "love" and "fraterni-ty" express "the residual minimum of political affect" and that such notions persist because

"what is rightfully expected of the political [...is] to take charge of a force of affect inherent in being-with."[1] Thierry de Duve suggests that the French revolutionary triad of *Liberté, Equalité*, and *Fraternité* "translate the three Christian maxims expressed in the 'theological virtues,' *Faith, Hope*, and *Love*, into the political register,"[2] but fail in fact to fully elaborate the potential of Christianity's "postreligious virtualities," particularly the universally addressed political maxim of love. Summing up such trends, Richard Beardsworth argues that, given the diremption between the economic, political, and religious spheres that characterises globalisation, "a new form of secular love that bears the active promise of the community of humanity should be strongly affirmed."[3]

The contours of love's contemporary networks, meanings and practices have often been the object of theoretical analysis. For sociological systems theorist Niklas Luhmann, love is a particular modality of cybernetic communication that allows the interpersonal management of affect.[4] Following Luhmann, Dominic Pettman seeks "to locate and identify the cultural stakes which are forged at the rhetorical intersections between love, technology, and community."[5] Pettman aptly summarises one aspect of love's ambivalence:

> ...it is worth speculating whether love is the only discourse still available to us that is capable of salvaging singularity in a late capitalist epoch, or whether it is rather a case that "love" has become (or perhaps always was) a decoy that lures us into a libidinal economy… indifferent to individual suffering[.][6]

Anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli further delineates love's economies and affects in contemporary liberalism, conceptualising it as an intimate, aleatory event, both constrictive and transformational. Most of this discourse is focussed on *eros* and associated questions of romantic or domestic intimacy, rather than the political love of *agape*. Yet, the importance of this junction is still acknowledged, as when Povinelli argues that:

> ...love is not merely an interpersonal event, nor is it merely the site at which politics has its effects. Love is a political event. It expands humanity, creating the human by exfoliating its social skin, and this expansion is critical to the liberal Enlightenment project, including the languages of many of its most progressive legacies.[7]

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[1] Jean-Luc Nancy, "Church, State, Resistance," in Hent De Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (eds.), *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 102-12 (108-09).

[2] Thierry de Duve, "Come On, Humans, One More Effort if You Want to Be Post-Christians!" in De Vries and Sullivan (eds.), *Political Theologies*, 652-670 (654).

[3] Richard Beardsworth, "A Note to a Political Understanding of Love in Our Global Age," *Contretemps* vol. 6 (2006), 2-15 (6).

[4] Niklas Luhmann, *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy*, translated by Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

[5] Dominic Pettman, *Love and Other Technologies: Retrofitting Eros for the Information Age* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), xiv-v.

[6] Ibid., x.

[7] Elizabeth A. Povinelli, *The Empire of Love: Toward a Theory of Intimacy, Genealogy, and Carnality* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2006), 175-6.

Similarly, for Pettman, "Where things get increasingly sticky—and where the code threatens to crash—is in the conflict between a communal, agapic love and an interpersonal, erotic one,"[8] between, that is, love's universal and particularistic dimensions.

Amidst the turn to religion in contemporary thought, such explorations *of* love have become exhortations *to* love. At the forefront of this trend stands Slavoj Žižek. As he made his characteristically brash way through a range of theological positions, an affirmation of "the Christian experience"[9] became increasingly central to his attempts to articulate a radical politics combining Hegelian dialectics and Lacanian psychoanalysis. For Žižek, only an intolerant love for what is darkest in oneself and one's neighbour can break through the sickly multiculturalism and cynical consumerism of contemporary life. Whereas today's fundamentalism and liberalism have betrayed Christianity's subversive core, Žižek's rediscovery of the true Christian stance revives it as an authentically materialist rupture. In Alain Badiou's influential reading of Paul, he argues that the subject, innervated by the event, is transformed from a position of death to one of universally addressed life, that is, love.[10] Responding to Badiou, Žižek contends that contemporary leftist politics must not only recognise its Pauline roots, but recuperate and repeat the Christian cut through perverse fixations and communitarian identities, as Lacan and Lenin had both done in their own fashion: "the properly Christian way of Love …marks a New Beginning, breaking out of the deadlock of Law and its transgression."[11] The hedonistic enjoyment of late capitalism must be disrupted with a politics of love anachronistically wrested from the Pauline legacy, repeating "the active *work* of love which necessarily leads to the creation of an alternative community."[12]

Certainly, Žižek recognises that the Christian politics of love he is renovating comes with certain baggage and risks. The historical institutionalisation of the Church returned its psychic energies to the patterns of law, superego prohibition, and the erotic cycles of investment and identification, and solidified its once revolutionary politics into patterns of authority and identity. But true Pauline *agape* is, for Žižek, not identifiable with such distortions. Nor is it reducible to the Kantian duty to love, but rather overflows this superegoic law.[13] Love's cor-

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[8] Pettman, 35.

[9] Slavoj Žižek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2003), 6.

[10] Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism,* translated by Ray Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 87-8.

[11] Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London & New York: Verso, 1999), 151.

[12] Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute: or, Why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* (London & New York: Verso, 2000), 129-30. See also Slavoj Žižek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism? Five Interventions in the (Mis)use of a Notion* (London & New York: Verso, 2001), 50; Slavoj Žižek, Eric L. Santner, Kenneth Reinhard, *The Neighbour: Three Inquiries in Political Theology* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005); Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006), 282; Adam Kotsko, *Žižek and Theology* (London & New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 96-100; Roland Boer, *Criticism of Heaven: On Marxism and Theology* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2007), 335-390. On how Žižek's theological turn relates to Foucault, see Matthew Chrulew, "The Pauline Ellipsis in Foucault's Genealogy of Christianity," *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* vol. 11 no. 1 (Winter 2010), 1-15.

[13] Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute*, 100.

ruptibility means the true core of Christianity is not guaranteed but contingent: "Christian charity is rare and fragile, something to be fought for and regained again and again;"[14] it is "a struggling universality, the site of a constant battle."[15] It follows that the Pauline passage beyond law must be forthrightly repeated and translated into secular and political terms today. Žižek is not alone in taking up arms in this long-fought battle.

Julia Kristeva is another advocate of the uniqueness and depth of the Christian tradition as the pathway out of contemporary nihilism. While not as brash in her rhetoric as Žižek, Kristeva similarly proposes the politics of love as a risky but necessary commission today. In a long interview outlining much of her recent work at the intersection of psychoanalysis and the Christian experience, Kristeva expounds with some nuance the ambivalent heritage that Christianity's politics of love has left us. As she sums it up most pithily: "In the beginning was the Word, which is Love, and Logos prides itself on embracing love up until the point of death itself… Christianity's genius and its nightmares…"[16] Her task becomes in effect the hermeneutics of the ambivalent heritage of Christian love: "I, for my part, attempt to interpret the meaning of the demand for love, the lack of love and the hope of love, as well as the hate that is the inseparable other side of this."[17]

Yet for all this reserved circumspection, the positive agenda that she does propose might well give us pause. Speaking of the recent burning of Paris *banlieus*, an event so often interpreted in terms of religious and secular conflict, Kristeva asks:

> The French republic faces a historical challenge: can it deal with the crisis of belief religion no longer keeps the lid on that affects the very foundations upon which human bonds are built? The anguish paralyzing the country at this decisive moment is an expression of its uncertainty before the size of the stakes. Are we capable of mobilizing all the means at our disposal, police as well as economic, not overlooking those who offer their knowledge of the soul, in order to accompany with the necessary, fine-tuned listening process, with appropriate education and with generosity, this poignant malady of ideality expressed by our outcast adolescents that threatens to submerge us?[18]

These remarks indicate something of the political content of Kristeva's philosophical championing of European and Christian values: in the face of a divisive situation cutting to the core of French *laïcité*, against the destructive immigrant youth of Paris, should be mobilised—with love, of course—the police and their handmaidens, the professional psy-functionaries.

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[14] Ibid., 118.

[15] Žižek, *The Parallax View*, 35.

[16] Julia Kristeva, *This Incredible Need to Believe*, translated by Beverley Bie Brahic (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 56. See Julia Kristeva, *Tales of Love*, translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); and Julia Kristeva, *In the Beginning Was Love: Psychoanalysis and Faith*, translated by Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), where Kristeva conceives psychoanalysis as a discourse (logos) of love that inherits its individual and social therapeutics from the Pauline overcoming of psychoses. As Boer argues, "Kristeva invests heavily in a Paul who is good for you. Her Paul provides a transformative focus on love [*agape*] and the collective [*ekklesia*]." (Roland Boer, *Criticism of Religion: On Marxism and Theology*, II (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2009), 152)

[17] Kristeva, *This Incredible Need to Believe*, 64; cf. 25, 31.

[18] Ibid., 23.

A renewed politics of love is likewise central to the utopian autonomism of Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt. Their rallying call for the multitude to build up their immanent, creative productivity in opposition to the parasitic capitalism of Empire and biopower is often expressed in the language of Christian love. The coda to *Empire* proposes a "militancy [that] makes resistance into counterpower and makes rebellion into love."[19] Among the inserts cut from that book, alongside other religious themes such as hope and prophecy, there is an *intermezzo* on love in which, describing the "negative dialectics" of the likes of Derrida as "futile," they ask whether refusal can be presented "as a positive proposal."[20] "The truth of resistance," they write, "consists only in this: the affirmation of life."[21] In this positive biopolitics, "only love can construct a new ontological condition and a new being."[22] Beyond the dead-ends of critique and deconstruction, then, the praxis of building a new way of life is informed and impelled by the capacities of a secularised Christian love.[23]

The final section of *Multitude* once more defines the constituent power of the multitude as "an act of love," arguing for the "need to recuperate the public and political conception of love common to premodern traditions."[24] This "love serves as the basis for our political projects in common and the construction of a new society."[25] It is an act of production; not just recognition or tolerance of pre-existing difference, but a matter of self-creation and transformation, becoming-otherwise in which "singularities, act in common and thus form a new race, that is, a politically coordinated subjectivity… When love is conceived politically, then, this creation of a new humanity is the ultimate act of love."[26] That we witness here the Nietzschean theme of the overman tied to the *agape* of his despised St Paul demonstrates the extent to which, in contemporary thought, religious values are certainly undergoing another revaluation.

Hardt and Negri's ongoing theorisation of love culminates in *Commonwealth* where they claim "love is really the living heart of the project we have been developing, without which the rest would remain a lifeless heap."[27] Recognising that its perceived sentimentality and religious baggage makes the term unpopular, they nonetheless insist on its central political and philosophical relevance, framing love as an event that, through joy, newly creates being, and as a force of social solidarity that through cooperation builds community: "Bringing together these two faces of love—the [ontological] constitution of the common and the [politi-

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[19] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press, 2000), 413.

[20] Nicholas Brown et al., "'Subterranean Passages of Thought': *Empire*'s Inserts," *Cultural Studies* vol. 16, no. 2 (2002), 193-212 (201).

[21] Ibid., 202.

[22] Ibid.

[23] For an attempt to reconstruct a "truly evangelical" anti-imperial conception of Christian love, see Mario Costa, "A Love as Strong as Death": Reconstructing a Politics of Christian Love," *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* vol. 8 no. 2 (Spring 2007), 41-54.

[24] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 351.

[25] Ibid., 352.

[26] Ibid., 356.

[27] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Commonwealth* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2009), 180.

cal] composition of singularities—is a central challenge for understanding love as a material, political act."[28]

Like Žižek, Hardt and Negri recognise the danger of an oppositional politics of love being caught up in practices of domination. Importantly, they recognise that it "is deeply ambivalent and susceptible to corruption."[29] In particular, they name "identitarian love" one corrupt form that produces, not the common, but the *same*; in the name of family, race, or nation, such corruptions of love define the "neighbour" in terms similar to the self and seek only to couple, unify and repeat, not to produce, create or become.[30] Yet, by defining such identitarian exclusions as not lacks or essential human nature, but rather as *corruptions* of love, they insist on love's primacy and its capacity to overcome its own distortions. Love is, they argue:

> …an open field of battle. When we think of the power of love, we need constantly to keep in mind that there are no guarantees; there is nothing automatic about its functioning and results. Love can go bad, blocking and destroying the process. The struggle to combat evil thus involves a training or education in love.[31]

A central operation of love, then, is not only to produce the common and make the multitude, but to set straight those corruptions of love that obstruct its work.

Deconstructing Love
As such remarks indicate, the return of religion and of the politics of love coincides with a positive political moment, a rejection of apophatic critique and a demand for normative intervention, a desire and willingness to wield power, however inventively and openly. We must move, it is said, from the negativity and disconnection of postmodern suspicion to a new, constructive politics of creativity and fraternity. With remarkable consistency, these attempts to reinvigorate progressive materialism are characterised as a break with the relativist tendencies of recent French philosophy and as a retrieval and indeed espousal of Christianity's political potential. Indeed, it is precisely the return to Christianity and the Pauline politics of universal love that, it is claimed, allows one to move beyond the impasses of the postmodern thinkers of difference, deconstruction, and historicism, and their perceived closure of political change.

Beardsworth encapsulates this current when he argues that "in recent French critical thought love is in general eschewed in the political domain because of its understood associations with universality and oneness"[32]—notions which, in the shadow of fascism and state socialism, are rightly seen as intolerable and thus against which thinkers such as Deleuze and

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[28] Ibid., 184.

[29] Ibid., 182.

[30] Ibid. Similarly, Hardt elsewhere affirms Paul's "broadening the concept of love from the mere cloister within the family or the couple. It's recognizing love as a properly political concept as the foundation of the community. …love is corrosive of identity." (Creston C. Davis and Michael Hardt, "A Conversation with Michael Hardt," *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* vol. 8, no. 2 (Spring 2007), 163-188 (186-7)) See also Antonio Negri and Anne Defourmantelle, *Negri on Negri*, translated by M.B. DeBevoise (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 147-149.

[31] Hardt and Negri, *Commonwealth*, 195.

[32] Beardsworth, 8.

Derrida have insisted that difference and singularity are untotalisable. However, given that our post-Cold War context of twenty-first century global capitalism is characterised more by fragmentation and separation, Beardsworth argues that "recent French thought['s…] basic gesture of critical suspicion is not appropriate to our historical age."[33] Rather, it is time to move on from the negative model of critique to reclaim universalism and fraternity.

Yet others remain suspicious of love. There has certainly been a significant (and often vehement) backlash against this so-called "return of religion," whether in the name of the Enlightenment, secular humanism, and the separation of church and state, or indeed of seemingly outmoded postmodern critique. Roland Boer proposes a half-century moratorium on discussions of "the political cul-de-sac of love."[34] Lorenzo Chiesa and Alberto Toscano criticise Žižek's endorsement of the Christian legacy in a time of fundamentalist presidents, "clash of civilisations" rhetoric and what they see as ludicrous "Christian values."[35] Melissa Gregg expresses reservations about Hardt and Negri's optimism: "How can love retain its political potential, when its registers and genres are so regularly 'corrupted' at the hands of the state, the corporation, and the family?"[36] On this view, the proponents of political love are naively sanguine about the possibilities of unshackling love from contemporary networks of capitalism and the interlinking of intimacy and ownership in middle-class morality.

For many, the inevitable conflict between the universal and particular dimensions of Christian love entirely disqualifies it as a political enterprise. "What is startling," David Nirenberg argues, "is that those who prescribe love and its politics are untroubled by or unaware of its long history of disappointment."[37] Through a "survey of the foundations of these political theologies" he seeks to make "plausible the suspicion that their promise of universal love depends upon and produces the very exclusions and enmities it claims to be overcoming."[38] The belief that a politics of love can free human society from instrumentalisation and interest, argues Nirenberg, leads directly to the exclusion of those who, it is decided, are incapable of

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Roland Boer, *Criticism of Theology: On Marxism and Theology, III* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2011), 301n72. Throughout these volumes, Boer argues that the enthusiasm of Žižek, Kristeva, Negri and others for political love too quickly bypasses the important step of articulating a materialist *grace*.

[35] Lorenzo Chiesa and Alberto Toscano, "*Agape* and the Anonymous Religion of Atheism," *Angelaki* vol. 12, no. 1 (2007), 113-26. It is notable, however, that even they ultimately argue that a form of political love is needed in our times, even if it will not be identifiable with any Christian formulation.

[36] Melissa Gregg, "The Break-Up: Hardt and Negri's Politics of Love," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* vol. 35, no. 4 (2011), 395-402 (396).

[37] David Nirenberg, "The Politics of Love and Its Enemies," *Critical Inquiry* vol. 33 (2007), 573-605 (575). Prozorov makes a similar claim regarding Hardt and Negri's "oblivion of the extent to which the modern biopolitical tradition is *already* based on love." (Sergei Prozorov, "The Unrequited Love of Power: Biopolitical Investment and the Refusal of Care," *Foucault Studies* no. 4 (2007), 53-77 (66))

[38] Ibid., 603. In a similar fashion, Regina Schwartz explores how Biblical monotheism's ideas of love are often tied to themes of possession (of land and women), identity, scarcity and restriction (of divine favour), and jealousy: "The logic of scarcity even governs love. We have seen how in the case of land the principle of scarcity engenders violence, and this is also true of emotional scarcity where the consequences are equally devastating." (Regina M. Schwartz, *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 81) Here the blessing of one people implies the curse of another.

such love. This logic is exemplified in Christianity which, commanding that one love one's enemies, created as an enemy the Pharisees and Jews who would not accede to these loving demands.[39] As Nietzsche put it:

> …what they hate is not their enemy, oh no! they hate "*injustice*," "godlessness;" what they believe and hope for is not the prospect of revenge …but the victory of God, the *just* God, over the Godless; all that remains for them to love on earth are not their brothers in hate but their "brothers in love," as they say, all good and just people on earth.[40]

This critique resonates with that of Gil Anidjar, who traces the fundamental exclusions in operation in the supposed universality of Christian Europe.[41] In a deconstructive reading across the domains of philosophy, literature, law, and theology, he explores how the production of the Jewish and Arabic enemy is an inescapable consequence of the Christian commandment to love. It is this violent history that is dangerously reproduced in attempts today to reclaim Paul and Christian love. Both Anidjar and Nirenberg perform quite explicitly a Derridean maneuver—found, for example, in *The Politics of Friendship*, where he argues that "every choice of friend require[s] the unethical exclusion of the nonfriend"[42]—that deconstructs the politics of inclusion by demonstrating the exclusions that it necessarily produces. In the history of the Church, indeed from its very origins, Christian love has been particularised, conditioning its supposedly universal address: the loving brotherhood of men here implies the inhumanity of those who refuse fraternity.

Žižek defends against such attacks by claiming that:

> Christian universality, far from excluding some subjects, *is formulated from the position of those excluded*, of those for whom there is no specific place within the existing order, although they

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[39] Alberto Moreiras argues along similar lines: "If the subjectivity of the subject is a function of the Pauline virtues of faith, love, and hope, if only those virtues can sustain the political decision, as Badiou says and Žižek ultimately subscribes, then subalternity emerges against the grain of Žižek and Badiou's thought as the position occupied by the faithless, the loveless, and the hopeless. Are they purely and simply the enemy? Do they simply follow the path of death?" (Alberto Moreiras, "Children of Light: Neo-Paulinism and the Cathexis of Difference (Part II)," *The Bible and Critical Theory* vol. 1, no. 2 (2005), 1-13 (1)); see also Alberto Moreiras, "Children of Light: Neo-Paulinism and the Cathexis of Difference (Part I)," *The Bible and Critical Theory* vol. 1, no. 1 (2004), 1-16.

[40] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, translated by Carol Diethe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), I. §14, 28-9. For Nietzsche, "In the final analysis, 'love of one's neighbour' is always something secondary, partly conventional and arbitrarily illusory in relation to *fear of the neighbour*." (Ibid., 149)

[41] Gil Anidjar, *The Jew, The Arab: A History of the Enemy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

[42] Nirenberg, 583. See Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship* (London & New York: Verso, 2005). John Caputo takes a more open tack: "Derrida makes explicit the undecidability that inhabits faith, hope, and love … Undecidability does not undo faith, hope, and love but provides them with their condition of possibility, supplying their element, the night in which they are formed and performed." (John D. Caputo, "What Do I Love When I Love My God? Deconstruction and Radical Orthodoxy," in John D. Caputo, Mark Dooley and Michael J. Scanlon (eds.), *Questioning God* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press), 291-317 (313-4))

belong to it; universality is strictly codependent with this lack of specific place/determina-tion.[43]

Hardt and Negri, when asked in an interview about "the importance of love to the politics of the present—and the democracy that is to come," opposed, to that "notion of love in which all difference is lost in the embrace of a binding unity," a notion of "love based on multiplicity," which involves "recognizing the other as different and recognizing that the relationship with that other increases our power."[44] They have long responded to "deconstructionist" criticisms of their work that question who and what is disqualified by their new political subject of the multitude—"the excluded, the abject, or the subaltern"[45]—by confidently claiming that the multitude embraces both the *singular* and the *common*. Love as the production of singularities in common overflows the restrictive and exclusive economies of identity.

Such are the vicissitudes of love in our postsecular moment, both timely and timeless, both roundly condemned and earnestly upheld. For all that these thinkers recognise love's ambivalence—its inescapable corruptibility, its violent history, its continual risks—they persist in affirming it with remarkable enthusiasm. As Nirenberg argues, "the vocabulary of love has a most peculiar virtue. Through it we fantasize the overcoming of those very exclusions that the history of its use has generated."[46] This history of exclusion continues to weigh heavily on a perhaps indispensable element of our cultural repertoire. For all its supposed urgency, we should not forget that two millennia of Christianised history have been saturated with precise-ly this obstinate motivation. Love has not been immune from complicity with empire, indeed perhaps it has produced it; but it has also been anti-imperial. Both the family and the *ecclesia* occur under its sign, both identitarian community and the community to come. Love has been a uniquely productive and tenacious technology of the self—in relation to others, to oneself, to truth, and to God—a technology of subjectification and of power that can be both freeing and dominating, both resisting and restricting. In writing the history of the present, our task be-comes one of discriminating this Christian heritage and the possibilities for freedom, affilia-tion, and affirmation it allows us. It is in negotiating this complex and overdetermined legacy that Foucault's work provides us with key resources.

Foucault and Love
As much as Foucault's thought is already multiply implicated in this domain—as a precursor for Hardt and Negri, as an adversary for Žižek—the relevance of his genealogy of Christianity, and the continued importance of his critical impulses, is not often clearly perceived. Foucault was, at times, quite capable of employing recognisably Pauline rhetoric of love against law, as when in a late interview he spoke of the disturbances produced by gay friendships:

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[43] Žižek, *The Parallax View*, 35.

[44] Nicholas Brown and Imre Szeman, "What Is the Multitude? Questions for Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri," *Cultural Studies* vol. 19, no. 3 (2005), 372-87 (386, 387).

[45] Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*, 225.

[46] Nirenberg, 605.

> …that individuals are beginning to love one another—there's the problem. The institution is caught in a contradiction; affective intensities traverse it which at one and the same time keep it going and shake it up. …These relations short-circuit it and introduce love where there's supposed to be only law, rule, or habit.[47]

Here the force of love is portrayed as possessing its own disturbing vitality. Yet resorting to such easy to hand Pauline language is rare. Love was not at all central to Foucault's conceptual vocabulary. When it did appear it was overwhelmingly as *eros* rather than *agape*.[48] His political philosophy was more concerned with freedom—*liberté*—than equality and fraternity, and indeed often cast the latter as totalising and individualising forces. Yet Foucault did have a stronger interest in religion than is often recognised, proposing a fragmented yet substantial genealogy of Christianity that was of great significance for his overall project.[49] While at times he certainly valorised the Greco-Roman care of the self, he was not simply anti-Christian but recognised numerous Christian practices of resistance and freedom, such as the eremitic asceticism of the Desert Fathers, the parrhesiastic pole of mysticism, and other anti-pastoral counter-conducts. Thus, while love rarely figures explicitly in Foucault's thought, we can in fact regard him as implicitly theorising the ambivalence of love, both on a general conceptual level, and in the specific details of his genealogy of Christianity. In his elaboration of the diagram of pastoral power, Foucault targeted the tightening of power relations carried out in the name of, and indeed through, love of God, self, and neighbour.

J. Joyce Schuld works patiently to relate Foucault's postmodern theory of power to Augustine's premodern theory of love, demonstrating subtle resemblances between the thought of these seemingly incongruous figures.[50] This encounter, she argues, mutually illuminates and deepens their respective critiques of political and religious authority. Power and love are each decidedly relational, omnipresent and morally ambiguous elements of social relations. For Schuld, the comparison with love opens up the seeming oppressiveness of ubiquitous power in Foucault, revealing each, in their overlap, as formative, creative, and transformative: "As with power, love exists only in and through dynamic and interactive social desires, habits, and deeds," it "above all leads individuals by patterning their fluid yearnings, impulses, and

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[47] Michel Foucault, "Friendship as a Way of Life," in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, edited by Paul Rabinow (*Essential Works of Foucault: 1954-1984, 1*; London: Penguin Books, 2000), 135-40 (137).

[48] See, for example, "True Love," part V of Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure* (*The History of Sexuality, 2*; London: Penguin Books, 1992), 229-246.

[49] On Foucault's philosophy of religion, see Jeremy R. Carrette, *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000); James Bernauer and Jeremy Carrette, eds. *Michel Foucault and Theology: The Politics of Religious Experience* (Aldershot & Burlington: Ashgate, 2004); John McSweeney, "Foucault and Theology," *Foucault Studies* no. 2 (2005), 117-44.

[50] J. Joyce Schuld, *Foucault and Augustine: Reconsidering Power and Love* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), especially 7-45. Likewise for Jonathan Tran, *Foucault and Theology* (London & New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 114-9, Foucault's emphasis on the care of the self and practices of truth can be linked to the Augustinian relational ontology of love. Thomas Lynch argues that Foucault's critique of Augustine in his (as yet unpublished) 1980 course fails to undermine a properly articulated, orthodox Augustinian subjectivity. Thomas Lynch, "Confessions of the Self: Foucault and Augustine," *Telos* no. 146 (2009), 124-39. For a different reading of the moral imperialism of Augustine's politics of love, see William Connolly, *The Augustinian Imperative: A Reflection on the Politics of Morality* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1993).

activities."[51]   However, another effect of this analysis is that the greater the commonality be-
tween relations of love and power, the more the former can be seen through the lens of the
latter. Due to its relational omnipresence, love can operate as a vehicle for influence and con-
trol: "Love, for Augustine, saturates every single relationship, bringing the sway of power into
all personal, interpersonal, and political dynamics."[52]   Therefore love does not supersede cri-
tique, but rather demands it, insofar as its relational fragility leaves it vulnerable to infiltration:
by sovereign violence, by racist divisions, by the principal of obedience to ecclesial hierarchies
and other stratifications of power, as well as numerous other pervasive incitements and costly
investments.

Yet for all Foucault's suggestive similarities to Augustine, a much closer and more di-
rect influence can be found in Nietzsche's famously vicious suspicion of Christian morality.
For Nietzsche, Christianity's much vaunted message of love in fact grew out of weakness and
resentment: "from the trunk of the tree of revenge and hatred… which created ideals and
changed values, the like of which has never been seen on earth—there grew something just as
incomparable, a *new love*, the deepest and most sublime kind of love."[53]   Nietzsche's genealogy
charted the devaluation whereby noble values were slowly taken over by the reactive forces of
herd morality that esteemed the superiority of meekness, humility and truth, shielding weak
souls from pain and suffering and denying reality and life: "The point was to devise a religion
in which love is possible: with that one is beyond the worst that life can offer—one no longer
even sees it. So much for the three Christian virtues faith, hope and charity: I call them the
three Christian *shrewdnesses*."[54]   Nietzsche traced how these shrewd and vengeful virtues were
wielded by ascetic priests as technologies of control over their closely watched, diligently
loved flock.

Much of Foucault's work could be aptly characterised as an expansion of Nietzsche's
genealogy of the Christian revaluation of values. While neither so blunt nor so wholly invest-
ed in a confrontation with Christianity's lies, Foucault was nonetheless regularly drawn to
stage an insistent and ambivalent encounter with Christian technologies of power and their
modern, scientific legacies. He especially followed Nietzsche in tracing one particular front in
the battle over love—the manipulation of slave morality by the priestly caste—through his
analysis of obedience and confession in the Church's ascetic institutions.

An analysis of pastoral power was central to Foucault's evolving genealogy of the de-
siring subject in the mid- to late seventies. His initial focus was on the practices of confession
and spiritual direction, and their demands of supervision, obedience, and intervention, which
expanded and intensified towards the permanent and continuous management of individuals.
This developed into a broader analysis of pastoral power as a whole, of which his 1977-80
courses provide the fullest treatment. Foucault emphasised that the pastorate was modelled
on the Hebrew theme of the shepherd-flock relationship—a beneficent power organised
around care for life, whose principal force and medium is sacrificial love. It focuses on the

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[51] Schuld, 20, 25.

[52] Ibid., 31.

[53] Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, I. §8, 18.

[54] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin,
1990), §23, 145.

interior, rather than the exterior, on love rather than violence: concerned with the well-being of the flock, "pastoral power does not have as its principal function doing harm to one's enemies; its principal function is doing well for those over whom one watches."[55] This beneficent power seeks to nourish and provide for the flock. This is not "the striking display of strength and superiority" but "zeal, devotion, and endless application."[56] The shepherd devotes himself dutifully to care for his flock. He keeps watch, takes care of others, and will even be called upon to sacrifice himself. His vigilant gaze provides constant and individual attention, at all times and over each.

This pastoral theme of the shepherd and flock, Foucault argued, eventually came to be institutionalised in relations of power within the church, a dimorphism of clergy and laity, priest and penitent, imposed through elaborate and exhaustive obligations of conduct and speech:

> In Christianity the pastorate gave rise to an art of conducting, directing, leading, guiding, taking in hand, and manipulating men, an art of monitoring them and urging them on step by step, an art with the function of taking charge of men collectively and individually throughout their life and at every moment of their existence.[57]

The Greco-Roman "care of the self" that Foucault analysed in his late work was here "integrated, displaced, reutilized in Christianity. From the moment that the culture of the self was taken up by Christianity, it was, in a way, put to work for the exercise of a pastoral power to the extent that the *epimeleia heautou* [care of the self] became, essentially, *epimeleia tōn allōn*—the care of others—which was the pastor's job."[58] The pastorate saw "the development of power techniques oriented towards individuals and intended to rule them in a continuous and permanent way."[59] In particular it established "a link between total obedience, knowledge of oneself and confession to someone else."[60] The result was tight bonds of mutual expectation fortifying the flock: "The Christian pastor and his sheep are bound together by extremely complex and subtle relationships of responsibility."[61]

It was from this religious apparatus of pastoral power that, alongside the deductive power of sovereignty, the productive power of modern biopolitics and governmentality emerged. It was only through Christianity, Foucault argues, that detailed, positive intervention in the lives of individuals became a properly political problem with the intensification and transmission (via Reformation and Counter-Reformation battles over spiritual direction) of the pastoral power elaborated in the Church into the modern secular arts of government, with their investment in the management and optimisation of a healthy, secure population

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[55] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*, edited by Michel Senellart, translated by Graham Burchell (Houndmills & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 123.

[56] Ibid., 127.

[57] Ibid., 165.

[58] Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress," in *Ethics*, 253-280 (278).

[59] Michel Foucault, "Pastoral Power and Political Reason," in *Religion and culture by Michel Foucault*, edited by Jeremy Carrette, (New York: Routledge, 1999), 136.

[60] Ibid., 143.

[61] Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 168.

through the scientific normalisation of sexuality and behaviour. This heritage of course passed through numerous breaks and dispersions. The disciplines "swarmed" from their monastic laboratories to new and wider domains, implanting ascetic practices among workers, soldiers, and criminals.[62] Priests battled with doctors as religious concerns became increasingly supplanted by those of science. The problematisation of sex in terms of concupiscence and sin was replaced by a medicalised morality concerned with norms and abnormality: "The flesh was brought down to the level of the organism."[63] Foucault characterised the mutation of the pastorate as follows:

> …it was no longer a question of leading people to their salvation in the next world, but rather ensuring it in this world. And in this context, the word *salvation* takes on different meanings: health, well-being (that is, sufficient wealth, standard of living), security, protection against accidents. A series of worldly aims took the place of the religious aims of the traditional pastorate.[64]

Religious technologies were generalised, adapted, and disseminated, and thereby the pastoral diagram of loving individualisation went on to colonise new populations and domains of intervention.

Yet, Foucault did not understand this emergence of biopower and governmentality from the pastoral power of the Church as a process of secularisation. Insofar as the secular political reason of modernity did not overcome but rather further instilled and intensified the diagram of the pastorate, which proliferated in new spheres of investment, it is better understood as what he calls an in-depth Christianisation. In his 1974-5 Collège de France lecture course *Abnormal*, Foucault affirmed and extended historian Jean Delumeau's thesis that the Reformation and Counter-Reformation were not periods of secularisation after a Christian Middle Ages but, rather, represented a new wave of Christianisation of previously relatively unaffected populations.[65] The end of the Middle Ages, he argues, was:

> …not characterized by the beginning of de-Christianization, but rather… by a phase of in-depth Christianization. The period that stretches from the Reformation to the witch-hunts, passing through the Council of Trent, is one in which modern states begin to take shape while Christian structures tighten their grip on individual existence.[66]

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[62] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan (Penguin Books, 1991).

[63] Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, translated by Robert Hurley (*The History of Sexuality, 1*; Penguin Books, 1998), 117.

[64] Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 208-226 (215).

[65] See Jean Delumeau, *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, a New View of the Counter-Reformation*, translated by J. Moiser (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977).

[66] Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975*, edited by Valerio Marchetti, et al., translated by Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2003), 177.

The post-Tridentine pastoral augmented the techniques of confession with the practice of spiritual direction, and gave rise to waves of external and internal colonisation marked by the struggles over witchcraft and the convulsions of the possessed. For Foucault, modernity's laicisation of Christian morality consisted not in the jetissoning of religious baggage but, rather, in an in-depth Christianisation by which technologies of power, developed within the isolated strata of Christian practice that were monasteries and seminaries, became generalised political technologies for the government of the broader population, implanted deeper and more comprehensively into souls and bodies.

While Foucault did not explicitly thematise love as a core element of pastoral power, it is clear that the pastorate and the biopower that emerged from it are, indeed, a particular, historically triumphant mode of elaboration and institutionalisation of Christian sacrificial and individualising love. Others have made this link more explicit: Mika Ojakangas argues that "It is precisely care, the Christian power of love (*agape*), as the opposite of all violence that is at issue in bio-power,"[67] at least in its origins, while Sergei Prozorov likewise holds that "the Judeo-Christian 'shepherd-flock game', from which there descends the …tradition of Western pastoral power, [is] based on love (*agape*) and care of the living."[68] Biopower's investment in and control over life for its own sake is an extension and intensification of the pastoral love of the shepherd for his sheep; we remain within the loving embrace of a familiarly pastoral diagram of power today.[69]

One example indicates the role of love within pastoral power. In *Abnormal*, love appears as one of the important characteristics that qualified a priest as a confessor to whom a penitent could confess his sins well. According to the rules outlined by Habert, the confessor must possess "a 'benevolent love,' a love that 'attaches the confessor to the interests of others.' It is a love that combats those, whether Christian or non-Christian, who 'resist' God."[70] It is instructive to note the characteristics that Foucault relates: "a zealous and benevolent love that brings the confessor near the penitent."[71] What this passage suggests is that, if we understand power relations as conduct of others' conduct, this institutionalised form of Christian love serves to tighten those bonds: to further oblige the penitent to their priestly superior, who has appropriated God's right to forgive; to foster the pastor's surveillance; in sum, to bring the sheep closer within the fold. In more general terms, love is here a suffocating force that inten-

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[67] Mika Ojakangas, "Impossible Dialogue on Bio-power: Agamben and Foucault," *Foucault Studies* no. 2 (2005), 5-28 (20). See also the exchange that follows in that issue.

[68] Sergei Prozorov, *Foucault, Freedom and Sovereignty* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 104-5.

[69] Debate continues over the nature of this connection between Christianity and biopower. According to John Milbank, "only St. Paul points us authentically beyond the order of the biopolitical." John Milbank, "Paul against Biopolitics," *Theory, Culture & Society* vol. 25, nos. 7-8 (2008), 125–72 (136). Mika Ojakangas, on the other hand, argues that "rather than offering us means of resistance against utilitarianism and instrumental reason Paul, in fact, is one of the most important historical sources for the alleged contemporary nihilism." Mika Ojakangas, "Apostle Paul and the Profanation of the Law," *Distinktion* vol. 18 (2009): 47-68 (48). See also Mika Ojakangas, "On the Pauline Roots of Biopolitics: Apostle Paul in Company with Foucault and Agamben," *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* vol. 11, no. 1 (Winter 2010), 92-110; and the rest of issue 11:1 of *JCRT*, ed. Sophie Fuggle and Valérie Nicolet Anderson, on "Foucault and Saint Paul."

[70] Foucault, *Abnormal*, 178.

[71] Ibid., 179.

sifies power relations, saturating the lives of the community, bringing subjects nearer one an-other, strengthening attachments and obligations (to authority figures, to communities and identities), multiplying the opportunities for intervention in the actions of others, and, there-fore, reducing the openings in which one might maneuver or resist. The spread of Christian love, on this view, goes hand in hand with the spread of forms of surveillance, of direction, of obedience, of morality, of incitement and expectation. Such power effects can not be set aside as avertable corruptions of a fragile absolute or an onto-political creation of the common, as Žižek, Hardt and Negri, and others might like, but must be recognised and analysed as the political dangers internally produced in the very elaboration of true Christian love.

Suspicion and Love
Foucault's genealogy of pastoral power can thus be justly (re)described as tracing the histori-cal developments by which obedience, submission, and the exaction of truth were introduced into the apparatus of the religion of love, and subsequently implanted throughout the secular social body. In Nietzschean terms, the pastorate is the means of Christian "revenge," in its insinuation into common motives and activity of the paradoxical and weak values of humility, love, and the salvation of all. As Moreiras sarcastically puts it in a critique of Badiou and Žižek, "The problem appears when the law of love falls into the hands of the priests, of course: but doesn't it always?"[72] Foucault's rogues gallery included not only Nietzsche's vengeful priests, but an array of modern caring shepherds: the police as agents of charity, doctors and psychiatrists, ministers of government, and other hermeneuts, therapists, and administrators of life.

Thus, Foucault's genealogy of Christianity complements the deconstructions of love discussed above by situating repressive and violent practices (for example, the exclusion of the unloving and unloved Jew and Arab) within the frame of a positive diagram of power whose main task is the production of a community of loving and loved Christian subjects. If Christi-anity is the religion of love for self and neighbour, it is also the religion that inserted obedi-ence, surveillance, sacrifice and knowledge at the core of these relations—an historical legacy we are far from surpassing today. For Beardsworth, Foucault's failure to "affirm a collective understanding of love" (given his suspicion of such concepts as "reason" and "community") marks his thought as inadequate to our age.[73] But Foucault's suspicion of positive political projects, and the way in which their most well-intentioned efforts to heal or unite always in-troduce new dangers and threats, is far from irrelevant—indeed, it is most relevant precisely at the moment when calls for the reaffirmation of a political love are at their strongest pitch. Foucault argues that "the analysis, elaboration, and bringing into question of power relations and the 'agonism' between power relations and the intransitivity of freedom is a permanent political task inherent in all social existence."[74] The same must be said for relations of love, however universally addressed or politically inventive. While love might legitimately be identified as a progressive force of freedom and commonality—one that frees the subject from

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[72] Moreiras, "Part II," 12n5.
[73] Beardsworth, 3.
[74] Foucault, "The Subject and Power," 223.

its neuroses (for Žižek and Kristeva), one that produces new ecclesial communities (for Hardt and Negri)—love is also the force that congeals such revolutionary energies into the strictures of obedience and the proliferation of care. Whatever creative capacity for liberty it possesses, it is equally capable of being co-opted and stratified, and thus demands, even produces, the need for perpetual suspicion. We must ask: will the call for a universal politics of love addressed to our fragmented globe not instead serve as the alibi for another wave of in-depth Christianisation of new populations and domains? We must ask: are love's dangers best combated by love itself, or by a refusal to be loved in that way, by them, quite so much?[75] We must ask, modifying an important Foucauldian question: what is the price of the demand to love?

Foucault's fragmented genealogy of this ambiguous and fragile love came to an unfinished end in his crucial final lecture at the Collège de France. Having spent much of the last few years delineating the roles of *parrhēsia* or free and frank speech in ancient philosophy, on this day he finally crossed the threshold to briefly indicate some of its mutations in Christianity. As well as identifying some continuities between Cynic and Christian asceticism, he emphasised that Christianity introduced not only a relation to the other world beyond, but particularly the principle of obedience to God and His representatives. *Parrhēsia* here undergoes a reversal of values, developing an ambivalence which is tied, moreover, to the question of love. In the New Testament, it appears as both the "apostolic virtue" of courageous preaching of the gospel, and confidence in God's love entwined with obedience to His will. In the first century ascetics, the courageous *parrhēsia* of the martyrs becomes obscured by "the principle of trembling obedience" and its attendant mistrust, decipherment, and renunciation of the self.[76] The pastorate would of course come to develop and strengthen this rule of submission. Yet opposite the ascetic pole of silent, obedient self-hermeneutics that would lead to pastoral power, Foucault referred to mysticism as an example of "what could be called the parrhesiastic pole of Christianity, in which the relation to the truth is established in the form of a face-to-face relationship with God and in a human confidence which corresponds to the effusion of divine love."[77] Love here appears as a fragile and ambiguous element of Christian experience insofar as it structures both the parrhesiastic confidence in God's love and the anti-parrhesiastic demand for obedience to God and His pastoral delegates. Unfortunately, Foucault could not go on to further explore this split within the Christian experience of love and *parrhēsia*: to ask, for

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[75] Prozorov argues that "resistance to biopower must abandon its fixation on the figure of the sovereign and instead take the form of the *refusal of care,* an attitude of indifference no longer to the threat of power, but to its loving embrace. That is, "one should not *love* power either, neither in the sense of being obsessed with seizing it nor in the sense of reciprocating its *agape* in the utopia of a 'better' biopolitics." Rather, "To assert one's power as a living being against the power, whose paradigm consists in the 'care of the living,' is to affirm the radical freedom of the human being that precedes governmental care and does not require governmental love to sustain its life. The method of antibiopolitical resistance is to externalise power from human existence and thereby leave its agape unrequited." (Prozorov, *Foucault, Freedom and Sovereignty*, 111)

[76] Michel Foucault, *The Courage of Truth (The Government of Self and Others II): Lectures at the Collège de France, 1983-1984*, edited by Frédéric Gros, translated by Graham Burchell (Houndmills & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 331, 333.

[77] Ibid., 337.

example, how it might relate to the gospel commands to love God, one's neighbour (e.g. Matt. 22:34-40), and one's enemy (Matt. 5:43-48), or to a universal notion of political love as identified in Paul by the likes of Badiou. In this final lecture, in words we can now only read with pathos, Foucault suggested with reference to the modifications of asceticism and *parrhēsia* in Christianity that "Maybe I will try to explore these themes a little next year—but I cannot guarantee it." The analyses that he suggests in "a very brief sketch" are offered as "an encouragement… if you take them up in turn."[78]

The proponents of political love today would do well to heed Foucault's encouragement. Given that love is in essence "corruptible" (Augustine), "undecidable" (Derrida), "dangerous" (Foucault), enthusiasm must not be allowed to overrun suspicion any more than suspicion should be devoid of hope. Returning to the interconnected virtues that de Duve refers to as our "postreligious virtualities"—faith/liberty, hope/equality and love/fraternity—we find that some remarks of Foucault's on the first two can be applied equally as well to the one he most neglected. Justifying the necessity of suspicion, he remarks: "Liberation paves the way for new power relationships, which must be controlled by practices of freedom."[79] Or, responding to his interviewers' suggestion that he was overly critical and pessimistic in what they recognised as a surprisingly Christian tone:

> I don't think that to be suspicious means that you don't have any hope. …And if you are suspicious, it is because, of course, you have a certain hope. The problem is to know which kind of hope you have and which kind of hope it is reasonable to have in order to avoid what I would call not the "pessimistic circle" you speak of but the political circle which introduces in your hopes, and through your hopes, the things you want to avoid by these hopes.[80]

The same can be said for the third, "the greatest of these" (1 Cor. 13:13): the politics of love opens up new relationships of power; to be suspicious of these does not mean you do not have any love. The problem is to know what kind of love will avoid the "political circle," which would introduce in and through your loves precisely the things this love seeks to avoid. Perhaps, as Hardt and Negri write, "love is an essential concept for philosophy and politics, and the failure to interrogate and develop it is one central cause of the weakness of contemporary thought. It is unwise to leave love to the priests, poets, and psychoanalysts."[81] Yet it is equally unwise to replicate their shrewdnesses, or to suppose that, in the midst of this battle, love allows us to exit the political circle and leave suspicion behind. Foucault's genealogy of Christianity—specifically, of the emergence from pastoral power of modern governmentality and biopolitics—sketches a further significant dimension of love's suffocating history and contemporary risks. Only through attention to the dangers of our in-depth Christianisation could a politics of love be articulated that might unravel, rather than intensify, the diagram of power relations.

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[78] Ibid., 316.

[79] Michel Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom," in *Ethics*, 281-301 (283-4).

[80] Quoted in James Bernauer, "Cry of Spirit," in Carrette (ed.) *Religion and Culture*, xi–xvii (xvi).

[81] Hardt and Negri, *Commonwealth*, 179.

Matthew Chrulew
University of New South Wales
Sydney
Australia
mchrulew@gmail.com