

ARTICLE

Technologies of the Other: Renewing ‘empathy’ between Foucault and psychoanalysis.*

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ABSTRACT: This article expands Michel Foucault’s schema of the human ‘technologies’—those of *production, signification, power and technologies of the self* (Foucault, 1983)—to posit the existence of a fifth technological modality described here as *technologies of the other*. This refers to techniques and practices that facilitate the autonomy, not of the self, but of another person or persons. The specificity of these techniques of (other) care, I argue, is obscured in Foucault’s work in so far as they are subsumed as a ‘position’ within the technologies of the self, rather than afforded the status of a separate mode of technological practice in their own right. This not only misrecognizes their qualitative difference—the special kind of human ‘making’ they entail—but also allows for the dubious claim of an ‘ontological primacy’ of self-care when this is actually (at least ‘ontogenetically’) preceded by, and dependent upon, prior other-care. As one potential candidate or fragment of this alternative technological lineage, the paper revisits the writings on the psychoanalytic technique of empathy elaborated in the British Independent tradition of Donald Winnicott. It explores how these empathetic techniques engage in an ethics of ‘other-fashioning’—a necessary prelude to the emergence of capacities of autonomous ‘self-fashioning’—and suggests that such empathy can neither be encapsulated fully under the rubric of technologies of the self, nor read as isomorphic with the technologies of power.

Keywords: Technologies of the other; Foucault; Winnicott; empathy; autonomy

Introduction: Expanding the technological range

As familiar a ring as it has now to scholars of his work, Foucault’s introduction of ‘technologies of the self’ must have struck its initial audience as a jarring provocation. For here we find the most precious jewel in the humanist crown—the notion of *selfhood*—yoked to that which (at least for those same humanists and romantics) connotes its degraded opposite: the dehumanizing penetration of human being(s) by technology and technologies. Indeed this may be just the sort of oxymoronic coupling with which one could offend humanist and anti-humanist

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alike. Yet, as Foucault points out, the term *techné* from which our word 'technology' derives, originally meant for the Ancient Greeks no more or less than 'the art of making,' and it is to this broader concept of technologies as 'systems of techniques' that make (up) the human subject that the later Foucault appeals.¹

In this context we see Foucault take an elegant lateral side step from his sinecure as the pre-eminent theorist of power to announce it was never really power, after all, that was at the heart of his intellectual enterprise. Rather, he avers in a late interview, his motivation was the more encompassing, complex task of understanding how "human beings are made subjects."² Clearly the technologies of power were central to that undertaking, but just as clearly by the time of his 'ethical turn' something has shifted in the sort of conceptual terrain he finds it necessary to enter and survey in order to grasp other, equally germane, forms of *techné*. As if setting a corrective ballast to the weight of his own earlier depiction of the world of the docile subject (that hapless figure impinged upon in body, subjected in soul by the disciplining and normalizing techniques of power),³ Foucault reorients towards the rich philosophical sources of Ancient Greece where he excavates a quite differently inflected 'technical' language of subject-formation through the elaborate rituals, exercises and daily practices of self care: now we encounter a subject who is as much self-constituting as constituted; a self no longer squeezed in (and out) of shape by the techniques of power, but actively engaged in the aesthetic and ethical project of self-fashioning. Foucault schematizes this newly broadened 'technological' domain as follows:

As a context, we must understand that there are four major types of these "technologies" (*techniques*), each a matrix of practical reason: (1) technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform, or manipulate things; (2) technologies of sign systems, which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols, or signification; (3) technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject; (4) technologies of the self.⁴

In this paper, however, I put forward the hypothesis that there are five, not four major types of "technologies" whose historical effects we can trace. I claim that this fifth technology is already present in shadowy outline in Foucault's later work, but that he does not afford it full

¹ Foucault notes the potential for misunderstanding: "The disadvantage of this word *techné*, I realize, is its relation to the word 'technology' which has a very specific meaning [...]. One thinks of hard technology, the technology of wood, of fire, of electricity. Whereas government is also a function of technology: the government of individuals, the government of souls, the government of the self by the self, the government of families, the government of children and so on" (Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (London: Penguin, 1984), 256).

² Michel Foucault, "Afterward: The Subject and Power," in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1983), 208.

³ Foucault muses, "Perhaps I've insisted too much on the techniques of domination and power. I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others and in the technologies of individual domination [...] the history of how an individual acts upon himself in the technology of the self" (Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," in Luther Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick Hutton (eds.), *Technologies of the Self* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 19).

⁴ Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," 18.

status or grant it separate genealogical elaboration. The intention here then, is to take an additional step in Foucault's project of extending and pluralizing the human technologies by entertaining the idea of another matrix of 'practical reason,' which I dub here the *technologies of the other*.

In preparation for clarifying what this distinct category of *techné* might entail, let us firstly recall, by way of potential contrast, how Foucault defines his own vital addition:

Technologies of the self permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.⁵

There is no doubt that Foucault allows for the contribution of the 'help of others' to the successful production of the sort of subject who can practice self-care. In his last lectures in January and February of 1982 (in front of the sea of tape recorders and overflowing audience at the Collège de France) he sketches out key instances of the instructive-mentoring relationships that he finds in the texts of Ancient Greece. These illustrate how the transformation of an inadequate, unfocused, 'unsteady' form of subjectivity (what the Greeks called the *stultus*, or the person trapped in a state of *stultitia*) to the desirable state of the *sapient* (one who has achieved the state of *sapientia* and can therefore care for the self in appropriate ways) was mediated and overseen by the (philosophical) performances of authoritative guidance and other-care.⁶

My claim then is not that Foucault overlooks the centrality of the intersubjective and the relational to the emergence of appropriate forms of self-concern. It is, rather that the four-pronged technological typology, as it stands, *misidentifies* these techniques of *other-care* as *technologies of the self*, when these could be more accurately identified as a unique technological modality—what I call *technologies of the other* because they are 'systems of techniques' directed to the task of *other-care and other-formation*.

Is this unnecessary terminological hairsplitting? I think not, because a couple of unfortunate implications arise if we do not draw this distinction. Firstly, it implies that it makes no technical difference whether the figure who exercises these 'techniques' is actually the self (who reflexively and aesthetically gives form to her 'bios' or living existence) or whether it is an external figure providing 'help' (and thereby 'working' in some formative way upon the subjectivity of another; mediating and overseeing an essential change of state in her from, for example, that of *stultitia* to *sapientia*).

This technical difference is much greater than can be captured as one of 'positionality' *within* a single technological mode. It is not just that the techniques of care have a transitive object in the first case, and a reflexive one in the second, but otherwise constitute an identical system of techniques of human making. Rather, I claim, we are dealing more with a difference in kind, that warrants categorizing them as two 'types' of technologies, and not simply two aspects of the one and the same. Secondly, if we treat them as one and same 'system of tech-

⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶ See Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France 1981-1982*, edited by Frédéric Gros, translated by Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 131.

niques,' when in fact they have discrete histories, this muddies the genealogical waters, and we are not likely to get right their respective genealogical lineages.

If techniques that facilitate and mediate self-care do not *equate* to techniques of self-care, then what is unique about them? If there is a viable distinction to be made between the 'technologies of the self' and these mooted here as 'technologies of the other' then where does this qualitative difference lie?

By way of a preliminary sketch of this mooted technology of the other, we might return to Foucault's example of the relation between the philosopher Socrates and his pupil Alcibiades. At issue for Foucault is the portrayal of the transformation of the young Alcibiades from someone stranded in a state of immaturity, who does not know how to exercise the arts of self-care and self-governance, to someone who can do so properly. The metamorphosis from one state to another is not auto-poetic: it does not take place without the mediation of the techniques of (other) care and guidance that Socrates has to offer. This change in Alcibiades requires the perimeters of a hierarchical relationship: that of master-disciple. He must be guided. But the hierarchical aspect of this relation with Socrates is importantly different from the hierarchical asymmetry of relation that Alcibiades had with his previous lovers. These lovers may have cared for Alcibiades (as beautiful boy), but they did not care whether Alcibiades cared for himself. Indeed, their (erotic) interest in him cannot outlive his status as boy because it presumes a non-reversibility within that asymmetrical relation and a non-reciprocity within a strict (sexual) hierarchy. But Socrates deploys the clout of hierarchy (of his philosophical love) differently. As Foucault notes, he "demands no reward; he is disinterested; he performs it out of benevolence."⁷

So what is Socrates actually doing in his relationship with Alcibiades, and what 'system of techniques' informs his side of this (trans-) formative relation? Would we want to say they belong to a *technology of power*? If not, would it say enough about what is specific to other-directed techniques if we describe them under the auspices of the *technologies of the self*? Are such 'disinterested' techniques not different in quality and kind from either?

How do we categorize this special form of agency that exerts itself, not in the name of its own (direct) enhancement, but instead bestows its attentions and expends its energies in the careful cultivation of an agency *other than its own*, sublimating, so to speak, the *will to power* into a *will to empower another*? Socrates' benevolent other-directedness does not seem to require anything like a (Christian) self-abnegation. What then is the 'practical reason' involved in the philosophical love that Socrates offers? While it seems right to say that Alcibiades' task involves techniques of the self—such care is what Socrates exhorts him towards—this description hardly seems adequate to capture Socrates' side of the relation. What kind of agency is at work in a 'helpful' or facilitative technology?

It seems far from plausible to say that each of the two actors in this asymmetrical relation (of master and disciple) are both engaged in 'techniques of self,' if this means they display the same sort of technical skills in their relation with each other. While Socrates is clearly an active agent in the process (of Alcibiades' transformation), it does not seem to capture the peculiar nature of his technical agency to think of it as expressive of self-care. After

⁷ Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," 20.

all, Socrates is not making *himself* the object of care or cultivation. It is a transitive, not a reflexive, investment of his technical efforts.

What I am calling here the technologies of the other share with technologies of power the structural feature of being asymmetrical and hierarchical relations (and both are, in some sense, about regulating the conduct of the subordinate other). What distinguishes the former (potentially but not necessarily found in master-pupil; parent-child; analyst-patient relations) from the latter is the way they deploy that hierarchical difference in the service of the gradual modification, displacement and ultimate dismantling of precisely that asymmetry.⁸ It is this characteristic, I want to suggest, that might serve as a distinctive marker of this 'system of techniques.' They move towards the moment of a success that coincides with their immanent redundancy. The transforming effect they exert changes the other in such a way as to modify and undermine the original asymmetry of the relation in which such techniques were (initially) appropriate. In this sense they are the catalyst for the radical dismantling of their own conditions of practice, because they succeed 'technically' precisely in so far as they help shift the other from the position of subordinate recipient of care to that of an equal capable of reciprocity, mutuality, but also therefore capable of agonism and contest.

As Foucault tells us, when technologies of power succeed (too well?) in completely closing down all movement and reversibility in their asymmetrical relations, they have become technologies of domination. At one point Foucault explains that what mitigates against such a collapse (of relations of power into those of pure domination) is the agonism internal to power relations themselves (i.e. my will to power — my bid to get you to do what I want — runs head on into your will to power to do the same to me, and we therefore enter into various interpersonal and political struggles).⁹

What I am suggesting is that this may be only part of the story and that there is something else that provides a countervailing push against the collapse of power into domination. This is the presence of an alternative technological current of human formation — the technologies of the other. These are not coterminous with technologies of power in so far as they are motivated by a 'disinterest' of the sort that Foucault ascribes to Socrates. (Perhaps we need to envisage a Foucaultian genealogy of such 'disinterested' techniques (of the other)) But at the same its worth insisting that these techniques do not belong to technologies of the self either, in so far as disinterested motivation requires, and generates, different technical skills. In other words the care one extends to a (not-yet-equal) and dependent other cannot be of the same order as the one directed reflexively towards the self.¹⁰ The reason the care cannot be the same

⁸ This is why the technologies of the other might provide a bridge to the sort of democratic ethos that Ella Myers claims cannot be extracted from a Foucauldian model of care of the self. See here Ella Myers, "Chapter 1: Crafting a Democratic Subject? The Foucauldian Ethics of Self-Care" in Myers, *Wordly Ethics: Democratic Politics and Care for the World* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013).

⁹ See Michel Foucault, "The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom," in Lawrence Kritzman (ed.), *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977-1984* (London: Routledge, 1988), 3.

¹⁰ Of course we should expect that such technologies would manifest in different forms and constellations across time (much as the technologies of power do and the technologies of the self with which they intertwine). These historical variations notwithstanding, what warrants their genealogical reconstruction as

(and hence nor can its techniques) is because the relational asymmetry (or inequality or hierarchy) which obtains between two differently located positions of self and other (one over here, one over there) has no parallel in the reflexive unity of self (as object of care) and self (as subject of care).

To explore this idea a little further I hope the reader will indulge a sudden 'jump forward' chronologically to a very different example of how such a technology of the other might manifest at a different historical point in time. I turn now, not to the (homo-erotically inflected) philosophical care of the Ancient Greeks, but to the mid-20th century ('maternally'-inflected) model of other-care found in the Object Relations psychoanalysis of post-war Britain.

Empathy as Winnicottian technique

My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad.

Michel Foucault¹¹

As we saw, in his final lectures on the Ancient Greek aesthetics of existence, Foucault acknowledges that techniques of self-care are indebted to the transitive 'help' provided by an external (philosophical) guide. Yet the specificity of such transitive techniques of care, I claimed, remains under-theorized when they are confusingly subsumed as a 'position' within the 'technologies of the self.'

In the next section, however, I move into a very different intellectual terrain—that of the psychoanalysis of the so-called British Independents—what I reconstruct here as another potential fragment in this alternative genealogy of *techné*.¹²

In the tradition of British Object Relations we find a rich array of (clinically derived) hypotheses about how the human subject develops the rudiments of a basic capacity for self regulation (especially the regulation of primitive affect) via the encounter with the empathic responsiveness of an external (maternal) authority.¹³ Various described as the 'maternal care

the same *kind* of technology is the way they share this character of an 'other-fashioning' whose techniques are performed in a spirit of 'disinterestedness' by a gradually self-dispersing authority.

¹¹ Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress," in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), 231-32.

¹² A psychoanalytic paradigm introduces the problem of the role of unconscious processes. If technologies of the self (and other) are modes of 'practical reason' whereby the subject explicitly works upon her existence towards certain images of perfection etc, are there also technologies of the self (and others) that are less conscious or deliberated? There seems to be much in our knowledge of how we should regulate ourselves (particularly the affective parts of ourselves) and how we should govern our relations with others, that operates entirely unconsciously and at implicit levels 'below' what we explicitly formalize to ourselves as regulatory codes of human perfection or 'excellence.'

¹³ Obviously such techniques of other-care differ radically from those elaborated by Foucault in his study of the texts of Ancient Greece. I don't mean to suggest that they are all the same (any more than the technologies of the self that produce the pagan are the same as those that produce the Christian or modern

system'¹⁴; the facilitating environment of 'primary maternal preoccupation'¹⁵ or the containing 'alpha-function' of maternal 'reverie'¹⁶ what these mid 20th century psychoanalytically informed visions of early subject formation share is, firstly, an unwavering commitment to recognizing the ontogenetic dependence of the capacities of self care and affective self-governance upon the prior receipt of an (affect) regulating care of another, and, secondly, a foregrounding of empathy as the indispensable technique in that process.¹⁷

Empathy is the name given to one of the main techniques in these primary care systems for communication with a dependent other who does not yet possess language. Empathy is the correlate of that first 'dance of intimacy' of bodies, pleasures, and affects.

We might think of these, then, as pre-verbal "technologies of the other" and empathy as a privileged technique within them. Primary empathy, in this psychoanalytic tradition, therefore does not just constitute a form of 'knowing' the object—as if the subject were somehow a fixed entity prior to the encounter with empathy itself—but rather empathy has an essential *form giving function*. We might say, then, that empathy is a *techné* in the very broadest sense of that work of 'art of making' because empathy also transforms and *changes* what it finds; it does not just 'discover' the truth of that other in accord with pre-given normative codes, but it co-creates the other it finds through the aesthetics of their relational exchange.¹⁸ In this sense empathy can meet the criteria of the aesthetic (co-)formation of living substance, or "the idea of the bios as a material for an aesthetic piece of art."¹⁹

self). Rather my claim here is that these techniques of 'other-cultivation' might be placed within a genealogy. Space does not permit me here to focus on what is different in these historical manifestations of those technologies of the other, although this is a fascinating question. My prior task here is to firstly establish that they constitute a separate technological genus that would make such genealogical reconstruction a valid enterprise.

¹⁴ See Christopher Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object: Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known* (London: Free Associations Books, 1987).

¹⁵ See Donald Winnicott, "Primary Maternal Preoccupation," in Winnicott, *Collected Papers: Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis* (London: Tavistock, 1956), 300-305.

¹⁶ See Wilfred R. Bion, *Learning from Experience* (London: Heinemann, 1962).

¹⁷ Christopher Bollas, for example, details how the empathy of the 'maternal care system' constitutes the blueprint for the later internalized patterns of self care, and leaves its profound imprint in memory traces and psychic structures of the self. See Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object*, 46. To this degree, a core aspect of what goes under the rubric of self care and self-knowledge can be seen to be first mediated by, and dependent upon, a prior technology of the other, and a form of care of, and knowledge of, the other.

¹⁸ I don't, for example, only know or gain access to the 'truth' of who and what a baby is by comparing her movements with what I might find described in scientific handbooks on childhood development or pedagogy, nor from the baby books of professional experts, however many of these I may (anxiously) accumulate. Although these may exert an influence on our relation, there will also be something that I will learn about her as an idiosyncratic other that I can only learn in living out my relation with her.

¹⁹ Foucault notes: "What strikes me is the fact that in our society, art has become something which is related only to objects and not to individuals, or to life. That art is something which is specialized or which is done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everybody's life become a work of art? Why should the lamp or the house be an art object, but not our life?" (Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An overview of a work in progress," in Paul Rabinow, (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (Harmondsworth: Middlesex, 1984), 348). If we want to consider empathy in the context of the idea of 'the work of life as a work of art,' it is intriguing to

If such empathetic techniques have as their ethical 'substance' the earliest, pre-verbal affective states (passing between an infant and caregiver), then obviously we must recognize that they are operating in a completely different register than the kind of care that Socrates offers Alcibiades, or the advice Seneca offers in his letters about how to care for the self.²⁰ But that difference of register needn't mean that both do not qualify as legitimate material for the ethical and aesthetic fashioning of an individual's existence (or 'bios'). In this sense, what I am attempting is to draw on Foucault's late work to reframe our understanding of techniques of empathy within an ethics and aesthetics of existence, but one whose object is the living substance of the other, not the self. Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas describes early empathetic intervention this way:

Every stage in ego and libidinal development involves the infant in a relationship in which he is the object of parental empathy, handling and law. Every infant therefore internalizes into the ego those processes in which he is the other's object, and he continues to do so for a long time. Our handling of our self as an object partly inherits and expresses the history of our experience as the parental object, so that in each adult it is appropriate to say that certain forms of self perception, self facilitation, self handling and self refusal express the internalized parental process still engaged in the activity of handling the self as an object ²¹

In other words, our very first models of self-handling and self-management are not those explicitly gleaned from codified manuals of etiquette or formalized regulations of conduct (of the sort Foucault details for us from the Ancient Greek traditions of *souci de soi*). Rather, they are fundamentally unconscious 'ways of being' whose laws are born and imprinted in implicit memory, prior to any linguistic codifications or symbolic representation.

The writings on empathy in this analytic tradition is extensive and various, and I don't have time or space to analyze much of it here. For the purposes of this paper I restrict my comments to a few especially interesting passages in the work of British analyst Donald Winnicott.

But before I turn to examine Winnicott's contribution, I want to acknowledge that the pursuit of any common ground between Winnicott's (deeply humanist) theories of empathy and the anti-humanist work of the technologies of Michel Foucault is, to say the least, a far from obvious fit. While Foucault (to my knowledge) never wrote specifically on the modern technical or therapeutic deployments of empathy, it seems pretty obvious—on the basis of the

recall that the word 'empathy' (*Einfühlung*) was actually originally coined in the late 19th century German philosophy of aesthetics (and referred to the special kind of attention given to a work of art). Given this was its first conceptual home (before the psychologists took it over and established a monopoly on the concept) perhaps the transposition of empathy to a Foucauldian aesthetics of existence might be quite etymologically appropriate.

²⁰ See Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 96. Yet we can also note some curious affinities. Both aim at a certain 'steadying' or 'steadiness' of the subject (see here Nancy Luxon, *Crisis of Authority: Politics, Trust and Truth-Telling in Freud and Foucault* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 48 and 118), even if one sort of functions as an explicit project of 'practical reason,' while the other operates at the more implicit level.

²¹ Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object*, 51.

many critical things Foucault *did* have to say on the topic of psychoanalysis as a modern manifestation of confessional power—that he would have been no fan of the reparative, humanist claims often staked out today in its name. In this spirit we might want to ask, for example, whether the psychoanalytic and clinical ‘technicians’ of empathy don’t look rather like peddlers in soft power, experts in a professional gentleness that might “care us to death.” Likewise we might raise objections that such techniques of empathy belong demonstrably within the range of the technologies of power because they exemplify just that kind of uncanny loop whereby power ‘makes’ the very interiority of the subject which it then professes it has been able to access or ‘uncover’ as that subject’s inner truth. Let us call for shorthand this potential reconstruction of a Foucaultian critique of empathy (as technology of power) a position of “*empathy skepticism*” (where the skepticism is not so much about whether empathy is a real phenomenon, or whether or not it has real (technical) effects (in the clinic, in the nursery or anywhere else), so much as skepticism about the kind of technical role empathy performs in the power-knowledge nexus of modern societies and its potential arraignment as a force of normalization within that constellation). Empathy skeptics, in short, would be quick to point out some potentially vicious power implications of this (clinical) virtue. Let us now rehearse this skeptical position more fully.

Productive power and the ambiguities of ‘therapeutic authority’

On Australian television many years ago there ran an ad campaign that spruiked a non-alcoholic beverage designed to look like whisky, sold in whisky-shaped bottles, but that was most definitely not whisky. It was marketed under the memorable slogan: “Claytons. The drink you have when you’re not having a drink.”²² Just as this played on a liquid double-entendre (i.e. ‘drink’ as meaning any beverage whatsoever and ‘drink’ as meaning ‘the really good stuff’) we might say that there is something of an analogous double entendre regarding ‘freedom’ and ‘agency’ bottled (or decanted?) in Foucault’s analysis of modern biopower and governmentality. Indeed, this most elusive of all the modern technologies of power (elusive because it doesn’t, at first blush, even *look* like a technology of power—where are the chains? Who is forcing you to conduct yourself in any way you don’t want?) functions by entraining our investments in becoming the free and autonomous agents of our own lives. Consequently, it doesn’t work by opposing freedom. On the contrary, as Nikolas Rose observes, this is power that “implies freedom, it presupposes rather than annuls individuals’ capacities as agents, and works best through shaping the ways in which others construe and enact their freedom.”²³ Yet, who of us reads the critique of this form of power without becoming cognisant of a dis-

²² The advert was initially screened as part of a Government sponsored, health promotional, don’t drink-and-drive campaign, but took on a life of its own, entering Australian and New Zealand vernacular (by popular fiat) as an infinitely adaptable formula to describe an ersatz, fake or shoddily inferior version of just about anything. Hence: “Clayton’s X. The X you have when you’re not having an X.”

²³ See Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, “On Therapeutic Authority: Psychoanalytic Expertise Under Advanced Liberalism,” *History of the Human Sciences*, vol. 7, no. 3 (1994), 35.

quiet at the fact that we may have been quietly suckered somehow into living under the auspices of a "Clayton's" freedom: the freedom you have when you're not having freedom.²⁴

Consider the recent research of Paul Miller and Nikolas Rose on the rise of a new 'therapeutic authority' in British culture.²⁵ Their investigations of the venerable London psychoanalytic institute 'The Tavistock Clinic' reads as a sort of Foucauldian *exposé* of the uses and abuses of psychoanalysis for modern life. Here they detail how this institution functioned (and still functions) as chief headquarters and dissemination site for an army of psy-experts and professional do-gooders (therapists, social workers, T-group facilitators, nurses, marital counsellors, organizational consultants etc.). These "technicians of intervention" get put through their paces in training programmes steeped in Object Relations Theory (including, it must be said, the theories of Winnicott), and then get sent forth as professionals and experts to spread the good word of psy-bio-power in cohorts of earnest psycho-analytically 'informed' missionaries. The rhetorical punch of this sort of Foucauldian critique (and indeed of Foucault's own critique of biopower and governmentality) is swift, sharp and rather breathtaking.

Clearly, Miller and Rose's stinging observations concerning how a new 'therapeutic authority' rides side-car on the work of British Object Relations Theory in post-war Britain needs to be taken very seriously. Nor do I think we can afford to neglect or forgo Foucauldian vigilance to those moments where psychoanalytic knowledge aligns itself with biopower. However, is this all that this psychoanalytic tradition has to offer? The claim I make here is that the troubling nexus of psychoanalysis with the technologies of power does not exhaust *the whole* of its potential. The question is whether there is anything in Object Relations that could be read in tandem with (rather than trenchant opposition to) the work of Foucault (especially the last work on the care of the self)? We can also find something here that is a resource for a fresh approach to and renewed optimism about the projects of freedom and agency.²⁶

²⁴ Owen and Woodford parse (if not resolve) this paradoxical freedom by suggesting a distinction between 'autonomy' and 'freedom.' They note: "if freedom can be generally and formally constructed as the capacity to do, be or become x, it follows that an increase in capacities is an increase in freedom; however, it does not necessarily also follow that it is an increase in autonomy conceived as the leading of one's own life. This claim can be explained thus: a given exercise of disciplinary power increases one's capacities to realize (i.e., act according to) a social norm but while this denotes an increase in freedom, it does not denote an increase in autonomy in so far as it acts at the same time to form one's subjectivity as a socially normalized agent" (David Owen and Clare Woodford, "Foucault, Cavell and the Government of Self and Others," *Iride*, no. 66 (2012), 2).

²⁵ Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, "On Therapeutic Authority," 1994.

²⁶ In the face of the pressing need to find a 'way out' from this kind of paralysis and paradox facing the modern subject, Nancy Luxon recommends reframing the question away from the problematics of power (its common framing in political theory) and instead turning to rehabilitate a concept that has gone out of favour and fashion—that of authority (see Nancy Luxon, *The Crisis of Authority*, 2). For Luxon, it is in the asymmetrical relationships with figures of authority (doctors, educators, analysts, philosopher-guides) that we may find a privileged site for the generation of capacities of trust and truth-telling and 'dispositions to steadiness' that she sees as prerequisites for robust concern and resilient engagement with democratic citizenship. There are several possible affinities between Luxon's account of this productive relation with authority—one that is 'facilitative' of the subject—and what I am endeavouring to sketch out here as 'technologies of the other.' One difference to note, however, arises from the fact that Luxon's analytic 'authority' of choice is Freud, while my exemplary (but ambivalent) psychoanalytic 'technician of the other' is Winnicott. This changes the

At this point let us recall a witty observation made by the historian of science, George Canguilhem, who noted how, in France, when a psychologist completes his training at the Sorbonne, he is faced with the option of either going "up the hill" to the Pantheon (to throw in his lot with the philosophers) or of going "down hill" to offer himself as a technician of 'la Police.'²⁷ While such a schematisation into 'good' and 'bad' representatives of the psy-sciences is, of course, an unstable division whose appeal lies in thinking we can separate off and preserve what is 'good' in psychoanalysis from what might come to serve the interests of institutional power, this can also stand as a superb metaphor for the intractable ambivalence (the Janus-face) that haunts the appropriation of psychoanalysis by social and critical theory. Foucault too manifests this ambivalence.

To extend Canguilhem's metaphor to our discussion here, we might have to be prepared to say that psychoanalytic 'technicians' of empathy can either go 'up' or 'down' the hill; that the sort of 'defense' of the technical potential of empathy as an aesthetics of existence that I am sketching here need not, and perhaps cannot afford to, neglect critical questions such as: why, exactly, has the psy-scientific concern with 'empathy deficits' become so prevalent right now; why the (neuro)-scientific obsession with identifying 'empathy circuits' in the brain and why, at this particular historical juncture, would even a psychologist diagnose that we find ourselves in the midst of a modern "empathy craze."²⁸ Yet recognizing the need to cast a critical eye over the wild proliferation of 'empathy talk' in the psychological sciences and therapy cultures of neoliberal societies today (as the Foucault of the middle period could well inspire us to do), does not mean that we should (at least not without a fight) cede the entirety of its technical potential to the camp of 'la Police.'

What I focus on in the remainder of this paper is how Foucault's later focus on the aesthetics of existence might inspire a quite different and more ambivalent account of empathy as a practice in a potential technology of the other, rather than a one-sided dismissal of it as a

nature of the psychoanalytic authority in question (a 'maternal-empathetic' one versus a 'paternal combative-collaborative' one). The reason I chose Winnicott, rather than Freud, is not only because Winnicott has much to say about the technique of empathy (and Freud only a little), but because Winnicott's preoccupation is with a specific critical moment in the 'making of the subject' that Freud in fact does not concern himself with: namely the transition from a stage of absolute dependence of infancy towards (progressively greater) independence. The mother-baby unit of earliest infancy is not (yet) 'combative/collaborative.' The parties are not yet adequately differentiated. This is what Winnicott means by the ostensibly bizarre pronouncement "there is no such thing as a baby" (see here Donald Winnicott, "Anxiety associated with insecurity," in Donald W. Winnicott, *Through Paediatrics to Psycho-analysis* (London: Hogarth Press, 1952), 99). So what oversees and mediates the transition from the 'infans' to a more complex, differentiated entity that can 'resist,' 'protest,' begin to enter into formative battles (and collaborations) with authority? Winnicott's *simple* answer, we might say, is that it is (maternal) empathy. But his more *complex* answer entails recognition that such techniques of empathy are also (potentially) dangerous, if they are not also 'self-cancelling,' awaiting the moment of their own redundancy to yield to later forms of relation with the other. We might say that the 'resistant' subject, whose struggles with authority Luxon says are those that will *produce trust and truth-telling* are themselves already the *product* of another intervention: a prior asymmetrical relation which is not itself (yet) collaborative-combative, but one which relies on the empathy of the other.

²⁷ See Canguilhem quoted in Nikolas Rose, "Power in Therapy: Techne and Eros," *Academy for the Study of the Psychoanalytic Arts*, undated, 1.

²⁸ See Steven Pinker, *Better Angels of our Nature* (London: Allen Lane, 2011), 576.

technique of (confessional) power. As I hope is clear, this does not deny any validity to the critical analysis of the more problematic links between empathy, knowledge and power. But in keeping with the way Foucault thinks it might be possible to recuperate an '*ars erotica*' (with all its idiosyncratic pleasures and freedoms) from the constraining grip of the '*scientia sexualis*' of Western culture—so too it might, (perhaps) be possible to imagine a technical sphere of '*ars empathetica*' that could be likewise emancipated in an analogous way from the constraining assumptions of the contemporary Western (psy-)'sciences of empathy.'

The promises and perils of empathy as a technique of 'other-fashioning'

Let me now turn to a passage in which Winnicott makes a striking observation—one too often overlooked in the simplistic praises sung in therapy culture—and this is his complex observation that empathy can be *dangerous*. Describing the delicate formation of early, infantile subjectivity, Winnicott focuses on the phase

prior to word presentations and the use of word symbols [...] in which the infant depends on maternal care that is based on maternal empathy rather than on understanding of what is or could be verbally expressed. [At a later point...] the mother seems to know that the infant has a new capacity, that of giving signal so that she can be guided towards meeting the infant's needs. It could be said that if she now *knows too well what the infant needs*, this is magic and forms no basis for an object relationship.²⁹

Winnicott registers empathy as indispensable to the care of the *infans*, the speechless other, but also the less obvious point that, should this empathy continue beyond the critical point—in this case, when a new moment arrives and the infant is able to send a signal as to the nature of their need (a new capacity which, by the way, maternal empathetic sensitivity has itself made possible)—then the same technique of empathy becomes an obstructive block; a locking into place of the asymmetrical relation that inhibits the movement of the infant towards maturity and a more equal relation which can include protest, symbolic exchange and the 'in-betweenness.' If not practiced as an ultimately self-deactivating technique (we might even say the mother has to perform a kind of 'second order' empathy to know when empathy is no longer the right thing), then empathy morphs into a technology of power (rather than what I call a technology of the other).

I highlight this because of its complex implication that being empathetic with the other is not always, in fact, ethical, or for that matter 'virtuous,' but depends very much on the kind of relation prevailing between the parties involved.³⁰

²⁹ Donald W. Winnicott, *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment* (London: Hogarth Press, 1965), 50, *emphasis added*.

³⁰ In this way empathy for the 'subaltern' or dominated or disenfranchised social groups, we might say, can be equally abusive if it assumes to know what the subordinate party in an asymmetrical relation actually wants; where that assumed knowing works to block the ascension to the sort of subject position that can effectively communicate need, and enter into the space of agon and contestation. On the other hand there really are circumstances where that capacity to communicate does not exist because the subject has been refused access to the verbal space of articulation.

The technical work of empathy therefore demands the extremely subtle skill of handling a danger and a paradox: that such empathy must work towards the moment of its own immanent technical redundancy (which also, of course, coincides with its 'technical success').

But in what sense should we talk about such empathetic care as 'technical'? Shouldn't we restrict our use of 'technical' to imply the inhumane, the 'mechanized,' the kind of interaction that operates on the basis of an I-It and not the I-Thou relation, etc. and hence, by definition, something that is decidedly *not* 'care'? Wouldn't it be prudent at this point to ditch the language of Foucauldian 'technologies' as too compromised by these connotations, and turn instead to the language of an 'ethics of care' as more apposite for the kind of relational care to be addressed here?

In my view, in fact, it is actually here that a 'technological' framework (extended in the way that Foucault suggests) can come into its own. It offers something that we do not find in standard 'care ethics,' because it allows us to comprehend empathy as an (aesthetic) '*technique*' which means it does something far more active *to the other* than just 'resonate' compassionately with her experience. Rather it is 'technical' in the strictest sense of *techné* if it 'makes the subject' other than she was prior to its application; it oversees her move to elsewhere, to a different site of subjectivity. In so far as it brings about this transformation of state, it does not position her as the (abject) object of a perpetual tenderness, compassionate understanding, or, even worse, of a never-ending paternalistic 'responsibility.'³¹

If we think of empathy as a 'technology' of the other, then this is not to understand it as performing an all knowing, harmonious merger with the mute sufferings of the other. If it did this, it would short-circuit the other's emergence into the sort of subject who can verbally articulate protest and signal the nature of their own needs.³² In the context of the care-giving scene Winnicott observed that,

Mothers who have had several children begin to be so good at the technique of mothering that they do all the right things at the right moments, and then the infant who has begun to separate from the mother has no means of gaining control over all the good things that are going on. The creative gesture, the cry, the protest, all the things that were supposed to produce what the mother does, all these things are missing, because the mother has already met the need just as if the infant were still merged with her and she with the infant. In this way the mother, by being a seemingly good mother, does something worse than castrate the in-

³¹ This formulation of a (Foucauldian inspired) *technical* ethics and aesthetics of the other should be distinguished from, say, a Levinasian ethic of care. As Ella Myers has argued, whatever other merits it may possess, Levinas' ethics of the other offers a poor preparation for the kind of dispositions appropriate to a democratic ethos. In so far as it advocates an absolute and perpetual responsibility in the face of the other's need, it risks hypostatizing and stabilizing the profound asymmetry between 'carer' and 'cared for'—precluding ever moving towards symmetrical relations like equality, like reciprocity, like mutuality. See here Ella Myers, *Wordly Ethics*, 53-83.

³² Winnicott's sketch of the 'too good maternal empathizer' may be used as a suggestive metaphor for the related dangers for those who presume to be 'too good' at empathizing in the realm of politics. 'Empathetic sensitivity' on the part of those who are privileged when directed to dominated social groups, is equally abusive if it assumes to know what the subordinate party of an asymmetrical relation actually wants, and thereby blocks the ascension to the sort of subject position that can effectively communicate need and enter into the space of agonism and contention.

fant. We see therefore that in infancy and in the management of infants there is a very subtle distinction between the mother's understanding of her infant's needs based on empathy, and her change over to an understanding based on something in the infant or small child that indicates need. [...] one minute they are merged with their mothers and require empathy, while the next they are separate from her and then if she knows their needs in advance she is a witch.³³

In the context of the maternal care-giving, Winnicott describes how *empathetic responsiveness* is essential to the development of the infant other, but only to the point where a shift occurs and there is a destabilization of the previous relation of absolute asymmetry (and absolute dependence) in the direction of a greater equality between the two parties. If at that moment, however, empathy is not effectively disabled (in other words, if it not deployed as the sort of technique that has this paradoxical immanent self-cancelling instance as part of its successful performance, and as the point towards which it strives) then it will not allow for the essential transition to this other register of (verbal) exchange. In one sense it is still the same technique—it is still (maternal) empathy—but now its technical effects are suddenly 'dangerous' because empathy has not become defunct in the light of the transformation (in the other) which empathy itself has successfully effected. If at this point empathy is still applied, we might say that it has ceased to be a true *techné* because now, rather than being a mechanism for transformation or development towards greater autonomy of the other, it brings it to an abrupt halt.

This is what makes empathy such an ambiguous technique of other-fashioning: neither inherently bad (nor inherently and always good), but rather, always 'dangerous.' At the critical point when it has completed its technical task, empathy can begin to go 'bad' in the sense of becoming the instrument of the sabotage of the very autonomy that it otherwise serves to cultivate.

Contrasting empathy as technology of the other with Arendt's critique of empathy and compassion

But if we are to defend empathy as a (Foucaultian-inspired) technology of the other, then it may first be necessary to revisit why someone like Hannah Arendt was so adamantly hostile to empathy and compassion as political virtues, and was convinced they should be denied all political relevance.³⁴ This may bring us closer to pinpointing why, by contrast, it might be possible to affirm some political purchase to empathy as a (post-Foucaultian) technology of the other. Firstly, we see Arendt claim that compassion is *always directed towards a particular person*, while politics demands a level of generalizability that compassion cannot provide.³⁵ Secondly, she asserts that compassion in order to be authentic entails a strong identification between the compassionate person and one who suffers. However, she does not believe that this results (as Rousseau had hoped) in compassion generating a unity of common political will, where the

³³ Winnicott, *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment*, 52-3.

³⁴ For Arendt's trenchant dismissal of compassion as "politically speaking, irrelevant and without consequence" see Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1963), 75.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.

better off 'join' with the poor in affective and effective solidarity. On the contrary, the mode of identification at work in compassion, for Arendt, leads to a profound fusion of subjectivities that is anti-political in spirit precisely because it swamps the necessarily differentiated nature of the different perspectives of the actors involved. Against this de-politicizing 'merger-effect' of compassion, Arendt argues that it is the difference *between* subjects that is crucial to the capacity for debate, deliberation, constant contestation protest, agonism; all this is what marks a healthy political sphere, not mute communion with suffering others. Thirdly, and following on from this problematic of compassion's (con-)fusion of the political, Arendt believes that the compassionate person responds to suffering with a devolvement into *mute 'solidarity'* with the suffering other. Compassion can only 'speak true' in so far as it reduces itself to the language of the body and gesture, and relinquishes language as completely inadequate to doing mimetic 'justice' to the experience of suffering.³⁶ Let us call this linguistic collapse into a mimetic identification with mute suffering the threat of a hystericization of the political body. Against this threat, Arendt defends a vision of politics as an intensely voluble and loquacious business; most properly the field of deliberation, the contestation of reasons and debate, and never a mute communion with the experience of others.

It is because it can shuttle back and forth across the boundary between mute experience and the capacity for speech that empathy (unlike say, compassion or Levinianian 'care') is not a just passive 'resonance' with the experience of the other. Instead, it qualifies as an active technology in so far as it gives form to something in the other that was previously without adequate form; and it transfers these form-giving capacities to the other who lacked them prior to its technical intervention. Empathy, I suggest, is therefore best seen as a *techné* in so far as it brings about a shift and a transformation in the state of the other that it encounters (rather than simply merging with it). It does the work of mediation between the subject trapped in a compromised, immature or abject state (we might envisage this in different ways as the Winnicottian 'infans'; the Ancient Greek 'stultitia,' Kantian immature 'tutelage,' or the Arendtian other of mute suffering); but empathy does not leave the subject where it first meets her. If it works (as a technology of the other), then it draws the subject elsewhere and into a different state. In other words, the point of this technical deployment of empathy is not to meet the subject in her muteness in order to simply join her there in a spirit of compassion, but rather to pull, guide, gad, nudge her into speech and potentially also into politics, to protest, to agonistic struggle.

If compassion "abolishes the distance, the worldly space between men where political matters, the whole realm of human affairs, are located"³⁷ empathy, on the contrary, is the technique that opens up that space where it does not exist previously, or can re-open it after it has collapsed under the effects of suffering. Empathy prepares the way for the transition from mute suffering to "all kinds of predicative or argumentative speech, in which somebody talks *to* somebody *about* something that is of interest to both because it *inter-est*, it is between them."³⁸

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 86.

³⁸ Ibid.

How does it do this? If we agree with Arendt that the ethical obligations of compassion require a total mimetic identification (a merger with suffering which precludes the space of the political), the obligations of empathy entail instead techniques of working with the temporary, partial, and transitional. The imaginary identifications of the empathizer (as a 'technician' of the other) requires not only the skill of a partial identification, but also the tightrope skill of simultaneously *holding her ground as a distinct and differently located subject* from the one she empathizes with.

What this technique of a double-positioning does, I suggest, is to offer an additional channel in which the processes of identification can begin to flow: not only running from empathizer to empathy's object, but flowing back also in the other direction—namely it allows for the sufferer's *identification with what is different in the empathizer, specifically with her partial refusal of relegation to a position of mute suffering*. This holds out the prospect of something different, alien, strange, with which that other may in turn identify to bring about an internal shift. Or perhaps, we might say, that they come to know their position *is* a perspective, a location from which it is then possible to move elsewhere. This introduction of difference and differentiation (from the state of muteness) may also be seen as the entry into (and not the termination of) the political (as *inter-est*) in Arendt's sense. Finally, if compassion leads to us falling silent alongside the suffering other, offering mute gestures as the only authentic expression of solidarity, then empathy's task, by contrast, is rather to pull the sufferer back into language, to convert the mute 'gestures' of suffering back into the contested realm of political and symbolic representations.

Empathy beyond the technologies of power?

"Sandra is my best friend."

"Why is she your best friend?"

"Because she does what I want."

(Conversation overheard between a mother and her 5 year old daughter)

If, as discussed earlier, the technologies of the other might be rendered separate from (although always in relation to) what Foucault described as the technologies of the self, is there equal cause to view these technologies of the other as qualitatively distinct from the technologies of power? In other words, is there a matrix of practical reason different from the strategies of (or will to) power, of getting others 'to do what I want,' perhaps even reconstructable genealogies of a *will to empower* (the other), running alongside, and in tension with, the more commonly identified *will to power*?

What does it mean, for example, if I genuinely want the other in my care to become autonomous and to learn to pay attention and 'take care' of how she conducts herself in the world—as we saw earlier Socrates wanted for his pupil Alcibiades; and as perhaps might inform, in a more everyday context, what the mother above might want in regard to her child? What if what I want is to prepare her to deal with a world to come that effectively lies beyond the horizons of what I (or my authority) can now see or even vaguely predict? What if I want

to fashion in her a flexibility of response, a way of 'going on' that may lean on, but will invariably need to go beyond, what any of my authoritative injunctions or enjoining can provide; or to prepare her to be witness to the demise (or at least of the limits) of my authority, as part of the process of *becoming* an authority herself? Am I still working within a technology of power here? Or, is this paradoxical mode of 'getting her to do what I want,' when what I most want is for her to attain her own mature autonomy and to be prepared (as Kant might say) to dare to use her own reason, something else altogether from—something orthogonal to—a (pure) technology of power? I have suggested above that it is the immanent redundancy of the techniques of other (care) that may give us a way to differentiate the technologies of the other from the technologies of power.

If we acknowledge the existence of such a 'will to empower' as possessing its own genealogical histories (albeit concurrent with yet not entirely subsumed by the genealogies of the 'will to power'), then it may be possible also to make conceptual space for technologies which entail a kind of 'other-fashioning' that is different in quality from, and should not be equated with, that of the technologies of power. The former would be a *normative project* devoted to the cultivation of the autonomy of the other, while the latter is appropriately characterized as a *normalizing project* that does not have the autonomy of the other as its goal. If Foucault's work is problematic because of "a tendentious link that he makes between normativity and normalization,"³⁹ can we correct this by insisting on the difference between the technologies of power that tend towards the production of docile bodies, on the one hand, and the technologies of the other?

It does not seem right to say that this paradoxical desire for the other's autonomy (paradoxical because it entails that I want her to possess the formal capacity to want differently from, or even in contradiction to, any substantive wants I might have) should equate to the sort of Christian abnegation or sacrifice of the self which Foucault famously found so problematic. On the contrary, the technologies of the other whose quality I am attempting to capture here would exclude practices of self-abnegation as much as they do relations of domination. If technologies of the other entail the exertion of power, these are, I want to suggest, highly paradoxical forms of power in so far as they entail the depositing or progressive transfer of power, authority and capacities for judgement *away from themselves* into a locus that is not their own (except by extension and proxy). What if I want the other to be able to go on without me, as the best way of genuinely continuing the legacy that I have to transmit? What if the ultimate failure of my authority is, in fact, the measure of its successful sublation into a technology of the other?

Let us recall again one of Foucault's most succinct definitions of the technologies of power as those technologies "which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject."⁴⁰ Perhaps here is where the differences between the technologies of power and what I am calling the technologies of the other become most evident. If the technologies of power entail, as Foucault tells us, the "objectivizing of the subject," then the technologies of the other are, by contrast, the *subjectivizing* of the

³⁹ Lois McNay, *Foucault and Feminism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 155.

⁴⁰ Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," 18.

other—i.e. making the other an agent by formal extension of my own agency—and not the inert or passive object of what I want. Likewise, if the technologies of power determine the conduct of individuals to “certain ends,” the technologies of the other, in even sharper contrast, involve fashioning the other and her conduct to *uncertain ends*. The uncertainty of what the other will do when she becomes a fully agentic subject is precisely what is most *undetermined*. For those who practice the technologies of the other, the ends of the other’s mature autonomy must, by definition, be *uncertain* and not preordained. To adapt the phrase (and sentiment) with which Foucault describes the open-endedness of his own philosophical project: “The main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning. If you knew when you began a book what you would say at the end, do you think that you would have the courage to write it?”⁴¹ This logic, I would suggest, applies also to the technologies of the other. If I know for certain how my child, how my student, (or, if I am a political leader, how my governed people) are going to turn out in advance, would I be able to sustain the necessary courage to engage in the paradoxical demands of this other technology?

Conclusion

In this article I have argued that Michel Foucault’s account of the ‘technologies’ can usefully be complemented by an additional technological mode described here as the *technologies of the other*. I suggested these should be viewed as distinct from both the technologies of the self and the technologies of power respectively. As an example of such a technology of the other and its unique practices, I briefly reviewed theories of empathy that appear in the British psychoanalytic tradition of Donald Winnicott. These offer, I argue, ways to re-conceptualize the phenomenon of empathy as an aesthetic and ethical technique of *other-fashioning*, and hence a transitive (rather than reflexive aspect of an) aesthetics of existence. This account of empathy as a (post-Foucauldian) ‘technology of the other’ relies on both Foucault and psychoanalytic visions of how the human subject gets made to describe empathic practices as conducive to the realization of self-mastery and autonomy.

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⁴¹ Michel Foucault, “Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault October 25 1982,” in Luther Martin and Patrick Hutton (eds.), *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press), 9.